

No.62 • SCIENCE FICTION • HORROR • FANTASY • ANIMATION • SPFX • 95p

STARBLURST™

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Rod Serling



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TWILIGHT ZONE



THE TWILIGHT ZONE

STARBURST™



This issue of Starburst is respectfully dedicated to the memory of Rod Serling.

Starburst 62
October 1983 issue

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CRAVIN FOR CRAVEN

After watching the video of Wes Craven's *Deadly Blessings* issued by Spectrum, and having re-read your review of the film back in *Starburst 45*, I thought your reviewer, Phil Edwards, would like to know that the shock ending (the appearance of the Incubus) cut from the theatrical release, is included in the video version.

When I read that the ending had been scissored from the film by its distributors, Barbar International, I too was outraged. I enjoyed the final scene very much, although I thought the film worked just as well without the supernatural element. However, it is gratifying to see that Spectrum have had the decency to leave Wes Craven's film as he intended it to be seen.

Finally, I think *Starburst* is the best magazine of its kind and I look forward to receiving my copy every month for many years to come.

Mark Palfreyman,
Alvaston,
Derby.

Thanks for the info, Mark, though Craven reviewer Phil Edwards was aware of the restored ending on the video version of *Deadly Blessing*. Our feeling was that the ending made the film more thought-provoking. Was Wes Craven intending to indicate that so-called "crank" religions may sometimes be right, despite the illogicality of some of their claims? Or was he merely tacking on a jump conclusion in the time-honoured style of *Carrie*? Does it really matter?

SYBIL MEETS CARRIE

I am a *Star Wars* and Sybil Danning fan and was recently treated to a *Star Wars* and *Battle Beyond the Stars* double bill at a local cinema the night before I went to see the Liverpool premiere of *Return of the Jedi*—a great film but not as good as the first of the trilogy. I must say that Carrie Fisher is still as breath-takingly beautiful as ever.

About Sybil Danning—she is the perfect woman, it's as simple as that. Beautiful, a fine actress, a living reflection from a dream. I have seen just about all of her films and she seems to improve with every viewing.

Finally, would you please print my full address as I would be grateful if other *Star Wars* buffs could trade information on the background of the film, as, even though I read the original book, *The Adventures of Luke Skywalker*, several years ago, there are still a few things that aren't quite clear to me. In return I have some very interesting bits of info not revealed in any of the films. For example, do you know who Owen and Beru Lars really were, or what the Clone Wars were?

Frank Cannon
97 Worcester Road,
Bootle 20,
Merseyside.

Starburst LETTERS

Starburst letters, *Starburst Magazine*,
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London, NW5, United Kingdom.



Above: Carrie Fisher as Princess Leia, dressed to kill, in the forest of Endor in *Return of the Jedi*. Opposite page, top left: A revealing publicity shot of the very lovely Sybil Danning. Top right: Ernest Borgnine and Maren Jensen in a scene from Wes Craven's *Deadly Blessing*.

Ah, Frank, you have the soul of a poet—"A living reflection from a dream". Keep on turning out copy like that and we'll bring you in to replace John Brosnan! But you're right about both Carrie and Sybil. Quite extraordinary ladies, aren't they? But fret not, *Starburst* readers of the fairer sex... the intrepid Phil Edwards will be trekking to his native Australia later this year for the exclusive purpose of interviewing Mel Gibson for those very pages. And that's a promise!

MORE CARRIE

First, thank you for the excellent coverage of *Return of the Jedi* and *Halloween III*, for *Things To Come* and *It's Only a Movie* by the witty John Brosnan. The format and the layout has improved greatly over the earlier issues, the colour stills are gorgeous and the interviews and write-ups filled with information. All in all, *Starburst* is the best magazine of cinema and television fantasy.

However, I do have one or two suggestions and requests.

How about an interview with Carrie (Princess Leia) Fisher. Since *Star Wars* first came out, I've read dozens of interviews with Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill the directors, producers, special effects men and even, Anthony Daniels, Peter Mayhew and Kenny Baker, but hardly a word from Miss Fisher.

Now I've heard she's in Britain for a few days, so how about a long interview, fellas?

How about some more on-location interviews, show behind-the-scenes filming?

For a magazine of cinema and television fantasy, the television fantasy, I feel is sadly neglected. Come on, how about some interviews on programmes like *Doctor Who*, the greatly missed *Blake's 7* and other series?

On the whole, though, you do a great job and I must now wait for the dull monotonous days to drag by until the next superb issue comes out. Good cinema-going to you all.

Paul Benwell,
Bournemouth,
Dorset.

As you'll no doubt know, Paul, *Starburst 61* carried (no pun intended) an interview with the Princess that was, Carrie Fisher. And the very issue you hold in your hands now contains extensive coverage of *The Twilight Zone* tv series, which, it is rumoured, will be screened later in 1983 by BBC-2—the first time, we believe that the show has been aired nationally in Britain. See? We are trying to please all of the readers all of the time.

STARBURST AND CHANNEL 4

At last I've gotten around to writing to you to say what a tremendous magazine you produce for us, the faithful



fans of science fiction, horror and relevant genre films.

I have been with you right from your inception, and every issue you have produced has improved in all respects. The *Thing to Come* pages are a delightful tease, your reviews are a great help in deciding what to view and what to avoid. The regular columns are great and in particular, the *Video File* items are invaluable. All true followers should have a video machine, but there are so many 'monstrous' tapes around that we really do need to be told what not to waste our money on. Would it be possible to extend this important col-

umn to two pages or more?

Finally, it would be tremendous if **Starburst** could approach Channel 4 with regard to broadcasting a regular show covering all the films on release, looking back on old favourites, holding competitions, interviewing the stars, producers etc. There's a great wealth of topics to cover - indeed it could be a visual **Starburst** now that would be something.

Surely Channel 4 would help, especially as so much is happening after all these years, 2007 and *Star Wars* started the ball rolling and the trend shows no signs of slowing up yet. So there must

be a reasonable audience. How about it?

Anyway, thanks for sparing the time to listen to my views.

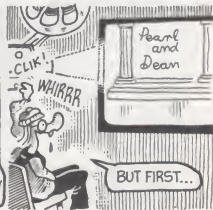
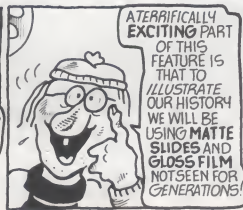
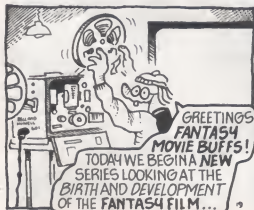
Looking forward to your 60th issue (5 years!). Many, many congratulations on 5 wonderful years of cinematic, **Starburst**.

Dave Baldwin,
Merseyside.

Alan McKenzie replies: "It's funny that you should suggest the idea of a **Starburst** type show on Channel 4, Dave. Earlier this year I wrote to Channel 4 chief Eric Flackfield with precisely that suggestion. Mr Flackfield seems in-

terested in the idea and passed my letter on to 'the appropriate department'. The bad news is that I received a letter from commercial tv's Leslie Halliwell who felt that Channel 4 already covered fantasy movies well enough and the cost of such a show far outweighed the interest. If any of our readers disagree with this view then drop a line to Eric Flackfield, Channel 4, 60 Charlotte Street, London W1, I rather suspect that if Mr Flackfield received 5000 letters from members of the public he might reconsider the possibility. Just remember to keep your letter short and polite. ■

The Return of **FLICKERS** by Tim Quinn & Dicky Howett



MAD MAX III!

Max Rockatansky is coming back. And yeah, Mel Gibson's playing him for the third time.

Although George Miller was all very tentative about it when we last met, his producer-partner, Byron Kennedy, has now confirmed *Mad Max III* should be ready for summer shooting. If Terry Hayes' script treatment comes up to scratch. "We want," says Kennedy, "*Mad Max III* to be a quantum leap over *Mad Max II* as that film was a quantum leap over the first *Mad Max*." My sentiments, exactly.

One way to make things turn out better than ever, apparently is Kennedy's notion of two directors. George Miller will handle what he's best at—action!—and stage director George Ogilvie is being tapped to helm the rest. Not really sure why: George can certainly handle action well enough. Look at *Twilight Zone*. He gets drafted on to the film almost as a late minute idea and then the Miller's take wastes the floor with Landis, Dante and Spielberg. (It's now the last story in the film instead of Spielberg's because of reactions at American previews.)

As for Mel Gibson starring again, well, d'you think he'd let anyone else play the role that he's made his own and that has made him the most in demand actor in Hollywood today? His agent has told Miller and Kennedy that mel will be free come May '84. Well, not exactly free... Mel is on a million bucks a movie these days. "He's probably worth it," says Kennedy. No question. That's why he's into the new *Mutiny on the Bounty* film, plus *The Running Man* with Rachel Ward and *The River* with Sissy Spacek.

Oddly enough, due to American release patterns and re-titling, *Mad Max III* will be called *The Road Warrior II* in the States, which must be the first time a sequel has switched numbers in different territories.

MAD MAXIMALS

A new "Max/Miller" movie is a must, if only to show the rippers how it should be done. There's mini-Maxes all over the shooting shop of lats. I'll be introducing three in feature form shortly: Jeffrey Byron in *Metalstorm*, Michael Paré in Walter Hill's *Streets of Fire*, Steve Sandor as *Stryker*. Now there's one more—in *Fear in a Handful of Dust* toplining Steve Kanaly, alias Dallas' Ray Krebbs.

SUPERMAN IV?

On a visible high with the opening week's take and a rare trip to America (he loathes flying but wanted to meet Reagan at the Washington premiere), producer Alexander Salkind says there could be a *Superman IV*. Brave words considering none of the Supie trio has yet managed to get out of the red.

I'm not surprised with the incessant mix of numbers the makers play around with—on and off the set. For example, the first two films ended up costing \$120 million. It is stated in *America*. Funny... the figure the Salkinds mention in London is \$107m. Despite North American rentals of \$157.2m, that still means a loss—in our lingo, a debt—of \$32m. Except it's \$42m. In the American version of the same tale of woe.

By pure coincidence (!), the \$32m figure is exactly what *Supie III* cost to fly. A hefty portion of which, I've heard it called another sixth, went on securing Richard Pryor as the only star around, this side of Burt Toupe or Sylvester Alone who could just sweep the gargantuan-priced series into profit margins.

"After *Superman I*, I was ready to jump from the tenth floor because of my debts," comments Alexander Salkind. "Things were

Tony Crawley's THINGS TO COME

Below: A clean-cut Mel Gibson as pursuit cop Max Rockatansky in a scene from *Mad Max*, produced by George Miller and the late Byron Kennedy. *The Road Warrior* is to return soon in *Mad Max III*. Opposite page, bottom right: Star Wars and Dark Crystal Producer, Gary Kurtz, who is currently involved in a film version of Will Eisner's *Nemo* cartoon.



better after *Superman II* and I was willing to jump from the fifth floor. After *Superman III*, I'm hoping to just walk out the front door." And straight into his limo! Debts or no debts. I've not noticed much reduction in the Salkind high-lifestyle since starting to put *Supie* in the soup in 1977. It's the same old film/stand story. Films may not succeed, but producers never lose. Penny does not come into it, at all.

And so, if he's expecting *III* to save his hide, why gamble on starting up a whole new debt pattern with *IV*? Well, Alexander Salkind feels that *III* will (like *Rocky*) do better than *II*. Which means better, in America, than \$85m. "But," he says, in a further proof of sub-standard economics, "if the film did as little as \$40m, we'd go ahead with another one." Judging by the way the opening business dropped by 32% into the following weeks, *Superman IV* may just be a figment of Mr Salkind's continually fertile imagination.

There's no *IV* story as yet. Indeed, (see next story), there's no star, either. Unless, of course, the world or DC Comics is ready for a black *Supie*pryor...?

PACKING BAGS

Chris Reeve has turned in his cape. *Superman III* is the end of Metropolis. For him, anyway. "Look, I've flown, become evil, loved, stopped and turned the world backward. I've befriended children and small animals and I've rescued cats from trees. What else is there left for *Superman* to do?"

Apart from making a profit, does he mean? Reeve's departure has little to do with finance. Merely fate. Of a sort. He feels he's an actor who's become a sort of forced-feed movie star, and he wants to get back to his acting roots again. Originally, his contract as an unknown New York actor was for seven *Superman* movies. After the ruckus over the first, which damn nearly became a two-in-one like the *Salkinds' Three/For Mucksters* trick, Reeve became a star with enough clout to insist on re-writes. Of his scripts. And his story. His revised deal was for three *Supies* only. Well, he's done them. So he's gone. Faster than a speeding bullet. Back to the stage for the summer and, in fact, tending

his colleagues' rights as a member of the governing council of his Actors' Equity union for the next five years. He also has a couple of new films to make, including arty James Ivory's *The Bostonians*.

While shooting *Supie III*, Chris did go on record as saying if a *IV* came along, he might be interested. He'd have to read it first. The script, and, I guess, the contract. And I wouldn't be surprised if and when such a movie was finally confirmed, he'd be back. I mean what is he going to do now except make more non-*Supie* films that will fail like all his non-*Supie* films. By 1985, he might need the Salkinds, just as much as they'll need him, although they're bravely saying for now things like—remember how many guys played Tarzan.

Forge the other rumours. Chris Reeve is not guesting back in his long Johns with *Supiegirl*. I gather the feeling at Pinewood was that the Salkinds didn't want him even if he made himself available.

Well, they asked for it. They see to understand the star system as much as they understand financing. They made the guy into a star and were surprised when he exercised the muscle they gave him. Now, they're doing it all over again with Helen Slater as *Supiegirl*. Not the most co-operative of ladies, already, I hear tell. If Helen turns on the Salkinds, too, how long before Henry Thomas becomes *Supieboy*?

Maybe not. What the Salkinds really want, of course, is a *Supie*!apdog.

CONAN II

Richard Fleischer must have done a bang-up job of *Amityville 3-D* for Dino De Lauro. Dino has booked him to handle *Conan: King of Thieves*, which will probably be shot in Mexico. It'll open in American in the '84 summer-time blitz. Arnold Schwarzenegger, obviously, plays *Conan* again. Then, he's due to be an alien in *The Terminator*. His mission on earth? To kill a certain woman. Some poor guy—not yet cast—is gonna have to stop him. Won't be easy.

ODYSSEY II

Seems I was a bit previous, as they say, when thinking the battle between MGM/UA and 20th Century-Fox about the 2001 sequel, 2010: *Odyssey II*, was all over. At MGM, production chief Freddie Felt says scripting is going on and the film should be shot later this year now, not next year as he told me at Cannes. But Fox still has refused to concede that MGM, in fact, have the sequel rights.

BLUE THUNDER II, III, IV, ETC

It's on the cards that *Blue Thunder* will continue thundering—as a *TV series*. Well, they've got chopper footage galore. All they need now is new versions of Roy Scheider and Dan Stern, some (more?) mindless capers and dialogue, stick one on or in front of the other and that's another movie rip-off series. (I'm sure it'll finish up as a *Starsky and Hutch* and then one thing will lead to another as the Southern-fried *Burt Reynolds* type series get airborne and we'll have *The Flying Dukes of Hazard*, *Knight We'll Fly Again*, *The Thundering Good Life*, *Crosspads* and *Coronation Fleet*.

MONEY BAGS!

His name is Frans J. Alfman. He's Dutch. A banker. And not exactly buried in interview requests at the recent Cannes clambake. At least, not by the media. He is, though, more responsible than most for the *Superman*

films, *Flash Gordon*, *King Kong*, *Dune*, *Supergirl*, *Santa Claus*, *Space Vampires* and the first of the Jimbojudd space trilogy, *Escape From Beyond*.

You won't find his name on the credits. Just on credit-notes.

For Frans J. Alman has the answer to the question raised every year at Cannes when the Cannon Group act and hype about as if it had a money fountain. If one ever stops and asks just where Cannon gets its money from, it's not long before one wonders the same about the Salkinds and Dino De Donat. This year we found out. They get it from Frans J. Alman. Some of it, anyway; enough to get their projects rolling. He is the foreign sales expert of N.Y. Slavenburg's Bank in Amsterdam, which proves to be the main money supplier for all those ritzy—sometimes dizzy—extravaganzas from the wholly extravagant Cannon, De Laurentiis and Salkinds. Of which trio, you may be surprised to hear, only Cannon ever seems to turn a profit.

As Mr Alman might say: All that glitters is not guildier.

GENRE DOCUS

Documentaries about the making of our fave rare movies are becoming as plentiful as novelisations and it can't be long before they're all available on cassette and not just for sale-sakes. There's two out on the making of *Jedi*. Lou Gossett narrates one on the lensing of *Jaws 3-D*. That's called—after the film's unnecessary sub-title—*Shark's Don't Die*. And the Sunday Telegraph's David Castlet is working on one about the helming of *Supergirl*.

SOME RETURN(S)

The bi-annual battle for box-office history between Lord Lucas and St Spielberg is on again. As if you didn't know. With His Lordship well in the lead. I know how financial matters bore some of us in Readerland, so I'll be brief. The oh-so-cutesy *Return of the Jedi* (it makes E.T. look neo-realist) opened in America on the sixth anniversary of *Star Wars* opening, May 25—and immediately earned an apt \$6.2 million on a thousand screens. That smashed *Star Trek II's* opening day record. The first Sunday hit \$8.4 million; that's the best gross in single day record. After the first week, the total was \$41.1 million, \$20 million up on E.T.—and so the six-day record was smashed by a mere 64%. In short, that's the budget (\$33 million) back in less than a week. After twelve days... \$70 million! And all the rest is pure gravy train time. Again.

Same story over here. Box-office records exploded wherever some 325 prints of *Jedi* were projected... and it had passed a million quid mark in a week.

BAN BOND—NEVER!

I truly wonder why Cubby Broccoli, UA-MGM and the Ian Fleming trustees bothered, in London's High Court (and then, the appeals court), trying to prevent the new Connery-Bond being released. They must've known they didn't have a leg to stand on; or else *Thunderball* could never have been made in 1965, to start with. One of the appeal judges more or less told them to stop wasting producer Jack Schwartzman's time and money in defending his proved rights. Good for hizzoner. So why all the legal angst? It wasn't as if Jack was opening *Never Say Never Again* now, while the final Moore trip is making the usual box-office millions.

Could it be, that old Moore's Almanack crowd fear Sean's return now that inflation-

related figures prove that *Thunderball* and *You Only Live Twice* (and nary one of Moore's films) are the only Bonds in the Top 100 box-office hits in history? Or it is quite simply they're worried that Sean's film is a better, livelier movie than theirs? That would not be difficult. *Octopussy* is an unlucky 13th in the 21-year-casino series; *Never* is 15th, counting the *Casino Royale* débute of 1967. Once more, it's a Roger-Bond devoid of discernable, or decipherable plot. It's all go-go-go, with Moore definitely gone, replaced by stunt-doubles, when the going's too hairy and it gets noplacae in particular. The villainy is weak, the femininity fits the usual mould (last getting mouldy). *Newsweek* felt it the most enjoyable since *The Spy Who Loved Me*. Where has their critic been? Time magazine was closer to the mark: "The Bond Wagon Crawls Along."

BIG BUCKS

There's the heaps for all countries to import from Hollywood for 1984. Even before the '83 summer biz is wrapped, with *Jedi*, naturally, making nonsense of the hefty audiences for *Superman III*, *Octopussy*, *Jaws 3-D*, *Psycho II*, *Blue Thunder*, *WarGames* and *Flashdance*, the plans are already in motion for a bumper summer of '84... or even earlier. With the Cannon Group alone lavishing \$100 million on their projects, there's plenty of film-making lolly around. Here's a \$392 million selection for you to start booking for...

\$30 million a piece is going on the new *Tarzan*, *Indy Jones*, *Connery's Bond*, *Ridley Scott's* top-secret *Legend of Darkness* and *Costa-Gavras'* first of movie, *Bug Jack Barron* (yes that's bug not big). \$25m budgets are reserved for Richard Donner's delayed *Lady Hawk*, the new Batman epic and *Dick Tracy* (being financed by two studios). \$18m for *Mandrake The Magician*, still minus a director; \$17m for the next *Conan* and *Steve King's Firestarter*; and \$15m for John Boorman's *Emerald Forest*. But still with undisclosed budgets for now are Carl Sagan's *Contact*, John Guillermin's *Sheena*, *Queen of the Jungle*, the Salkinds' *Santa Claus* and the film it's delaying, *Pierre Spengler's Ice People*. Oh yes and would you believe *The Deep II* and... *Annie II*? No shortage then. And there's more. Of course there is, or I wouldn't have a column, would I?

GODZILLA AGAIN!

Animation doesn't come cheap aither. The Disney studio, desperate for a hit, pin their hopes on the \$20m *Black Cauldron*, with the \$15m *Basil of Baker Street* as first reserve.



NEWSFLASH!

Steven Spielberg is apparently joining the 3-D business—as first suggested here, oh, months ago! He's said to be working with his favourite director, Martin Scorsese, movie and record producer David Geffen and writer Howard Ashman on a 3-D film of the Broadway musical hit based on the old Roger Corman film, *Little Shop of Horrors*. Confirming the rumour is what's tough. Warner Brothers is the studio named in the deal, and Spielberg does owe the studio three movies. But "There's no validity to this story," says my Womers men in Los Angeles. And, for the moment, the Geffen Company does not return calls. (I often wondered just how Bernstein and Woodward actually managed...)

However, let me add (a) Marty Scorsese did tell me in Cannes that he was hoping to do something "lighter" after his next feature... and (b) I noticed that Joe Dante has two of the 1960 *Horrors* cast in his *Gremilins* film now being made at Warners for... Spielberg's Amblin Productions. More, hopefully, next issue.

Gary Kurtz is spending about the same on his *Will Eisner's Nemo* cartoon. And just added to the animation lists—a stop-motion *Godzilla* is being prepared by Don Carmody and the *Friday The 13th*—3-D director Steve Miner.

FAST TAKES

YODA, alias Frank Oz, directing the new *Muppets* in Manhattan movie... *Superman II* has been screened in China... Although delayed by *Santa Claus* Pierre Spengler still producing his *Ice People*, scripted by one of the *Octopussy* team, George McDonald (*Flashman*) Fraser... There's too many *Ice* titles happening, though... Richard Donner has nabbed Bertolucci and sometime Coppola cameraw, Vittorio Storaro, for his *Lady Hawk* fantasy in Rome... SYBIL DANNING into *Jungle Warriors* with Dennis Hopper and a *Playboy* spread that waters the eyes and must mean lots of new offers, for sure, for sure... Tanya Roberts did okay out of her *Playboy* spread. She won the *Sheena* role from 2,000 others who obviously

posed elsewhere... Top *Twilight Zone* John Lithgow struck it rich without posing for anyone (except in his *Garp* drag). He's going from *Footloose* for Herb Ross, instead of Mike Cimino (will he ever direct again?) to *Buckeroo Banzai*: I'm not kidding. But how come *Erin's Zone* plane is a 707 outside and much wider inside, by George...?

EVERETT DE ROCHE (*Harlequin*, *Patrick Road Games*), has penned Australia's razor-back scarier for Peter War's producers. Trooper John Gregory Harrison stars with Wagga Wagga's Bill Kerr and a lot of wild bores. No, sorry, it's not London film critics after it, it's wild boars!... Johnny Howard kidnaps Queen Elizabeth in *All The Queen's Men* in Spain come October. What's Madge doing in Spain?... Sandy Howard, too often promising more than he delivers (remember *Meatier*?) is hunting an American *Mad Maxer* for *Dead Heat*, with VTC (Video Trade Centre), the co-producers of Wes Craven's *Hills Have Eyes II*... Was finally does *Nightmare On Elm Street* next... ▶



Tony Crawley's THINGS TO COME

JOHN CARPENTER found room for Harry Dean Stanton and lovely Christine Belford in his Steve King movie, *Christine*. . . Mrs. C. Adrienne Barbeau, still among the Women Behind Bars on the LA stage. . . Rick Wake-man and Moody Blue Justin Hayward scoring Sandahl Bergman's *She*. . . Caroline Munro's *Last Horror Film* (looks like it was, too) is being sold anew as *Fanatic*. . . ITV has bought all 65 half-hours of Japanimation series, *He-Man and Masters of the Universe*. . . The Beeb hits back with a fresh (?) of series, *Tripods*, with teenage Jim Baker. . . The next down-under genre item is Sandy Harbutt's *Outpost*. . . Robert Ginty moving up in the world with *The Act* opposite Eddie Albert. . . Terry Marcel has finished *Prisoners of the Last Universe*. . . Publicity-man turned producer Edward Feldman preparing Eric Luke's original space show, *Explorers*. . . (MOST prized movie gimmick of the year, Bates Motel towels from *Psycho II*). Yes, but with or without bloodstains?

WHERE'S LUKE?

Why didn't Mark Hamill make the London trip for *Jedi's* opening? He's acting on Broadway,

that's why. Mark has taken over the lead role in the long-running British *Amadeus* play – opposite David Birney, TV's *Serpico*. A guy can't stiywalk all his life.

Also on *The Great White Way*, *G's* Michael Moriarty (in the lead role) and *Slaughterhouse 5's* William Atherton in a new production of the 1954 hit, *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial*. I notice one of Francey's family, Sam Coppola, has a small role as one of the members of the court. Back in '54, a certain Jim Baumgarner was in that position. Today, he's James Garner.

OBITUARY

Disney's top special effects artist from Pinocchio (1940) to *The Black Hole* (1979), Art Cickahank, 64, had died in Los Angeles following a long illness. Despite 35 years with Disney, it was during his seven-year spell at 20th Century-Fox, that he won an Oscar for his *Fantastic Voyage* visual effects in 1967. Back home with Disney, he was nominated again for his *Black Hole* effects, when the British *Alien* crew bet the Burbankers to the trophy.

Clearly one of Hollywood's leaders in special photography effects, Art was Nebraska born and first joined Walt Disney's staff as a cartoon cameraman in 1939, at his old Hype-rior Avenue studio. He dealt with layouts of multi-plane camera movements on such animation classics as *Fantasia*, *Bambi*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Snow White*. He first took up live-action work during the war in the Air Transport Command and then linked up with the legendary Ub Iwerks on opticals for



20,000 *Leagues Under The Sea* (1953) and all other Ub's works. No screen-credits though, until a Disney tv show, *The Magic of Music*. During his seven years break from being one of Disney's beaverling elves at Fox, he was concerned with all the other studio's effects movies including *Planet of the Apes*, *Toral Toral* and *Dr Dolittle* – and naturally his model and optical work for *Fantastic Voyage*. Invited back to Disney in 1971, he supplied his art for *Island At The Top of the World*, *Pete's Dragon* and was director of all miniatures' photography, as well as helping create Disney's Automated Camera Effects System for

The Black Hole. His last Disney works were films for screenings at EPCOT.

Ironically, the day after Art's death, Disney's veteran director of music, George Burns, 69, suffered a fatal heart attack while confined to hospital in Oregon. He penned many of Walt's favourite scores and themes – including *Davy Crockett's* song.

LAST WORD

Remember the tele-Logan's *Run Rem* – Donald Moffat? He plays Lyndon B. Johnson in the Nasatronaut movie, *The Right Stuff*. Once an android. . .

YOR BLIMEY!

With head bowed and hand on heart, I have to confess to missing the world premiere of *Yor* at the Cannes Festival. Those that did not miss it warned me off catching any later screenings. *Yor* is a Turkish-Italian entry in the *Conan* stakes with a touch of the sfs thrown into try and fool the people all of the time. Columbia bought it for America but that doesn't mean it's good.

TV's ex-Captain America, Reb Brown, plays this hunter from a future world – "Trapped in prehistoric times. Searching for his pest. He and the woman he loves, must fight the hostile tribes. Battle deadly beasts. And try to survive the violent forces of the newly born earth." *The Archers*, it's not.

Whether I'd have liked it or not, America's Kodiak Films are positive you will. Twelve hours after the Cannes premiere (not important enough to bring Reb Brown to town), the sequel deal was signed, though such Cannes announcements are often even more queryable than a bill on the Hotel Carlton terrace. For instance, one Kodiak spokesman said that *Yor II*, with Reb enacting under Anthony M. Dawson's direction, will start this summer. . . while another one stated, late autumn. (Dawson, of course, is really Antonio Margheriti and has by now dealt with every Italian rip-off genre going from spaghetti Westerns to lasagne horrors).

Juan Zanotto and Ray Collins, originators – some say, perpetrators – of the *Yor* comic strip were in Cannes. Weren't we all? Somewhere. I heard from one of those spokespersons that their sequel picks up where *Yor* left off. With *Yor* and Ke-Laa's spaceship landing and their continuing battles to save the human race to the bitter end, I think he said. Beg pardon? Oh. . . to better ends. Yeah, well, lotsa luck.





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AN INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR

Since I first took on the job of editing Starburst, with issue 20, I've always wanted to run an in-depth feature on the history of perhaps the best of the fantasy anthology tv shows, Rod Serling's *The Twilight Zone*. In fact, long-time contributor Tise Vahimagi wrote a mammoth 14,000 word piece which was never used due to the impossibility of obtaining the necessary photographs with which to illustrate the article.

Luckily, Jean-Marc and Randy L'Officier came to the rescue with the stills you see in this issue (a few extra pictures came our way courtesy of TV Zone writer Richard Holliss) and with the imminent release of the Spielberg/Landis movie version of the show, the time seemed ripe for a *Twilight Zone* Special Issue.

Special thanks go to Phil Edwards, who did without sleep for weeks putting the text material together and writing the captions for the photos.

We hope you enjoy this feature.

TWILIGHT ZONE

"This highway leads to the shadowy tip of reality; you're on a through route to the land of the different, the bizarre, the unexplainable . . . Go as far as you like on this road. Its limits are only those of the mind itself. Ladies and gentlemen, you're entering the wondrous dimension of imagination.

Next stop—*The Twilight Zone*." Rod Serling



Segment One: Directed by John Landis

"The aim of this movie is to recapture the atmosphere of eeriness and imagination the show so successfully created," says John Landis, who not only produced the film but also scripted and directed his segment. In it he tells the story of Bill (Vic Morrow) a bigot of frightening dedication. But Bill travels the road that leads to the Twilight Zone and in so doing finds himself deposited in various points in time as the victim of bigotry and racial hatred.

As Landis points out, his episode contains one of the traditional elements of the original *Twilight Zone* TV series – a strong moral point

of view. "Twilight Zone dealt with big themes – love, hate, ambition, war, peace, fear and racism." At one point in the story, Bill becomes a suspected Jew in Nazi-occupied Paris and on the run from the Gestapo; in another he finds himself about to be lynched by the Ku Klux Klan and in yet another he is in Vietnam, hounded by American and Vietcong troops alike. Wisely, all references to the helicopter sequence in this segment in which Morrow and two children died have been excised prior to the film's release. Interestingly Landis continued to explore similar themes in his current feature, *Trading Places*, although with that film Landis used the more pointed weapon of comedy to underline such human weaknesses and injustice.

"This film is a homage to both the show and Rod Serling," Landis has said of the *Twilight*

Zone movie, and fittingly his segment recalls, if only vaguely, an episode of the original *Zone* entitled *A Quality of Mercy*. This starred Dean Stockwell as a hard-nosed American soldier in the Pacific during WW2. He is about to attack a cave in which a group of half-starved Japanese soldiers can offer little resistance. Suddenly he finds himself as a Japanese soldier holed up in a similar cave many miles away on Corregidor. Despite pleading with the Americans to spare him and his men, they advance. Just as death seems certain he is whisked back through time and space and is once again the American about to attack the Japanese. Almost at the point of no return he hears a message that the atomic bomb has been dropped on Japan. Having seen both sides he relents, understanding the quality of mercy.



Segment 2: Directed by Steven Spielberg

In many ways it is only fitting that Steven Spielberg should have chosen a story about childhood regained for his segment of *The Twilight Zone*. For it is the world of children and a "childish" sense of wonder which has bewitched the director on many occasions in his films, most notably *E.T. The Extraterrestrial* for the former and *Close Encounters* for the latter.

Based on a third season episode, *Kick the Can*, it tells the tale of a group of old people who on entering the Twilight Zone, discover a means to return to the world of their childhood and once again rediscover the joys of life with a child's appreciation and "sense of wonder". As the number one director says of his segment, "There's a real symbiosis that occurs between young children from the ages of 6 to 7 and older people from the ages of 70 to 90. They both go back to a kind of natural daring – and that's wonderful about working with them. They both have trouble memorising their dialogue, and yet they're both spontaneous beyond reason."



Segment 3: Directed by Joe Dante

If a horror movie is going to be a positive experience – which I think it should be – you need to play with people's fears by relaxing them at certain points in such a way as to allow them the freedom to be scared," is how director Dante describes (in part) his attitude towards the macabre. And that's exactly what he did in his previous two frightworks, *Piranha* and *The Howling*. It's also the basis for his segment of *Twilight Zone – The Movie*.

It's a *Good Life* aired in the third season of the series and was written by Rod Serling, based on a short story of the same title by Jerome Bixby. It told the story of a small boy,



Anthony Fremont (Billy Mumy) with enormous and frightening powers – as Serling said in his introduction to the episode, "He's six years old, with a cute little boy face and blue, guileless eyes. But when those eyes look at you, you'd better start thinking happy thoughts, because the mind behind them is absolutely in charge." The kid's parents and friends are ruled by the tiny-tot terror, for among his arsenal of party tricks is the ability to turn a human being into a jack-in-the-box and cause snow to fall, thereby ruining local crops. He holds the entire town of Peaksville in the grip of fear, and does so right up to the fade-out and Serling's closing comment – "...if by some strange chance you should run across him, you had best think good thoughts. Anything less than that is handled at your own risk, because if you do meet Anthony you can be sure of one thing: you have entered the Twilight Zone." ►



The original TV version was written by George Clayton Johnson, an SF author who was also responsible for several other Zone shows of note. For the movie version, Johnson has rewritten his original in collaboration with Richard Matheson and Josh Rogan. In the original, actor Ernest Truex played the old man who initiates the action in an old people's home when he extorts his aged friends to be young by acting young, through playing an American street game called "Kick the can". Ultimately they find their lost youth... in the Twilight Zone.

Essaying the Truex role in the movie is Scatman Crothers, the remarkable black actor who commenced his career over sixty years ago as a singer-guitarist-drummer in Prohibition era "speakeasies" at the age of fourteen. In recent years Crothers has discovered a new career as a character actor in such successful films as *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Lady Sings The Blues* and most notably the Stanley Kubrick adaptation of Stephen King's *The Shining*. An inveterate composer, Crothers wrote and dedicated a song to his director during the shooting of *Kick the Can – A Remarkable Young Man*. ■

Of the three stories adapted from original Zone shows, *It's A Good Life* is the one which has departed from its source the most, although the premise remains the same: a small child holds his family in fear through his otherworldly powers. But in adapting the story for the big screen Dante and scriptwriter Richard Matheson have availed themselves of the advances made in movie special effects technology in recent years. Set in a highly expressionistic version of all those "family home" situations which prevailed through such popular 50s and 60s sitcoms like *My Three Sons* and *Leave it to Beaver*, Dante makes considerable use of famous television cartoon characters seen in the background on the TV. In the dazzling, effects laden finale, little Anthony (played by Jeremy Licht) unleashes his powers bringing some of the more monstrous cartoon creations to life – right out of the television screen.

Trivia buffs should note that Billy Mumy – the original Anthony makes a guest appearance at the beginning of the movie segment.



Segment 4: Directed by George Miller

Nightmare at 20,000 Feet provides one of the highlights of the fifth season of *The Twilight Zone*, thanks to the talents of Matheson and director Richard Donner. Likewise the same tale, re-adapted by the famed screenwriter and novelist performs a similar function in the big-screen version directed by the creator of *Mad Max*, George Miller.

As Miller explains, "The wonderful thing about doing this film is that it's the same challenge Rod Serling had with each *Twilight Zone*. You have to tell a story and establish a number of characters in just a short period of time, so everything you do has got to be very concentrated." And that's just what the Australian-born director does with his story of a man aboard a plane during a storm who sees a monster, or gremlin, systematically destroying the aircraft's engines. The only hitch is that he is the only person aboard who can see it!

Miller directs his segment with knowing panache, delivering a thrilling exercise in mounting paranoia with which all those with a genuine fear of flying can identify with. In the original episode it was a young William Shatner who played the freaked-out passenger who no one will believe, not even his wife. For the update, Miller has dispensed



with the spouse, further heightening the man's alone-ness and sense of rising paranoia. As George Miller says of his handling of the tale, "Everything is heightened – every sound is louder and more significant; he watches the stewardesses' eyes, waiting for any sign that something is wrong. He is simply a rational man afraid of flying. It could be you or I."

Where Dick Donner had to make do with ex-circus performer Nick Cravat wearing a furry suit "off the rack" from the MGM costume department and some crude model work, producers Spielberg and Landis utilised a combination of talents to produce the many and varied effects for Miller's episode, including animator David Allen and visual effects wizard Peter Kuran, and the gang at George Lucas' Industrial Light and Magic.

Miller is well-served by his cast, in particular John Lithgow as the put-upon passenger. Perhaps better known for his stage performances (he has a self-imposed pace of a play a season), he is gradually becoming equally well respected as a film actor since his debut in Brian DePalma's *Obsession* in 1976. He followed this with featured roles in *All That Jazz*, *Blow Out* and *The Big Fix*. He also performed the voice of Yoda in the radio production of *The Empire Strikes Back* for National Public Radio. However it was his performance as Roberta Muldoon in *The World According to Garp* which won him rave notices as well as an Academy Award nomination.

It's difficult to imagine that it was Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz who indirectly gave birth to the famed and much revered and loved *The Twilight Zone* TV series. But it was the comedic pair's production company, Desilu, which aired the first, 30 minute pilot for Rod Serling's idea for a "science-fiction sort of show" in 1958 as an episode of the popular CBS networked *Desilu Playhouse*.

Called *The Time Element*, it told the story of a man who dreams of the bombing of Pearl Harbor and, although he tries to tell the army of his premonition, he is regarded as a crackpot and dismissed. That, at least, was the idea Rod Serling gave the network, although the show's sponsors, Westinghouse, requested that the premise be changed slightly – the army could not be shown in a poor light in the programme because they were the holders of several valuable defence contracts and Westinghouse were keen not to upset their clients in any way. It was ironic that this should befall Serling's first venture into the *Twilight Zone*, for it was the very threat of censorship which had convinced Serling to retire from the field of controversial writing in which he had become famous.

Rod Serling was born Rodman Edward Serling on Christmas Day, 1924 in Syracuse, New York. He seems to have had a fairly unremarkable early life although brother Bob Serling (himself a successful novelist) recalls all that pulp magazines and movies played a part in both their lives. Upon graduation from high school Serling enlisted in the 11th Airborne Division paratroopers and following Basic Training found himself off to the war-torn Philippines to fight. While in the army Serling

On the eve of the release of *The Twilight Zone – The Movie* Phil Edwards takes a look back at Rod Serling's classic TV Show. Running for an amazing 156 episodes, it was one of the most popular science fiction series ever.



took up a short career in service boxing, winning 17 out of the 18 bouts he fought. It would prove excellent research material for the would-be writer for his withering attack on the boxing profession, *Requiem for a Heavyweight*, some years later. While in the army he had scripted programmes for Army Service Radio. Following his discharge in 1946 he enrolled at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio. After a year majoring in physical education he changed courses to literature and language. Perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of these early years was that Serling displayed an output that was nothing if not prolific. But if the writer thought of this work as less than remarkable – "I was a Hemingway imitator," he would recall later, "everything started 'it was hot'" – then later years would show his talent had grown immeasurably. During the 1948-49 he wrote the entire output of radio drama produced by the Antioch Broadcasting System's drama workshop, of which he had become manager.

In these early years while Serling was honing his craft, he sold scripts to television and radio including *Dr Christian* (radio) and an episode *Stars Over Hollywood* (TV) called *Grady Everett for the People* for which he received the fee of one hundred dollars. Serling married in 1948, to Carolyn Louise Kramer. They remained married until Serling's death in 1975 and Carolyn Serling keeps the memory of her husband and his work alive through the pages of *The Twilight Zone Magazine* with which she is actively involved.

In 1950, upon Serling's graduation, the couple moved to Cincinnati where Rod took on the job of staff writer for WLW radio.





While slaving away writing copy for everything from patent medicines to dull documentaries during the day, Serling would return home in the evenings to work on his own ideas. In 1957 Serling wrote, "The process of writing cannot be juggled with another profession. Writing is a demanding profession and a selfish one. And because it is selfish and demanding, because it is compulsive and exacting, I didn't embrace it. I succumbed to it." Finding the work at WLW stultifying, Serling decided to go freelance and quit. It proved the right move and the developing writer found a steady market for his work in the shape of the then material-hungry world of television. He sold scripts to a variety of early series, including *Lux Video Theatre*, *Suspense* and *Kraft Television Theatre*. In 1953 he wrote the television play *A Long Time Till Dawn* which starred an up and coming James Dean.

Through the early 50s Serling found moderate success with his writing, enough to support his wife and new daughter Jodi. But unknown to the Serlings, success lay just around the corner. In January 1955, the *Kraft Television Theatre* aired one of Serling's dramas. Called *Patterns*, it told a story of blind and cruel ambition in the world of big business. Thanks to Serling's fine script and commanding central performances by Everett Sloane and Ed Begley, the show garnered rave reviews and an Emmy Award for the author, the first of six such awards he would acquire over the years. Success often begets success, though for Serling the following year proved disappointing. Despite offers of work in television and films, the writer found it difficult to duplicate the power of *Patterns*, although science fiction buffs will find interest in the fact that Serling wrote an unfilmed screenplay for John Christopher's *No Blade of Grass* which was later risibly filmed by one-man-band Cornel Wilde.

However October 1956, saw the production of one of Rod Serling's most famous teleplays, *Requiem for a Heavyweight* which starred Jack Palance, Keenan Wynn and his father Ed Wynn in a tale of a fading fighter (Palance). The reviews for this live production were ecstatic and the *Playhouse 90* episode cleaned up at the Emmy awards, winning five trophies. Serling was also lauded with the Sylvania Award - the Television-Radio Writers Annual Award for Writing Achievement. He also picked up the highly regarded George Foster Peabody award for his teleplay, the first for writing ever given in the award's illustrious history.

The hiatus which had followed *Patterns* was not repeated this time. Serling found himself kept active with a series of teleplays for the *Playhouse 90* series as well as securing a contract with MGM to write four screenplays for them with a total fee of \$250,000 as payment. Financially, at least, Serling was made. So where, you might ask, does censorship and *The Twilight Zone* come into all this?

There was one annoying aspect of the work that Serling had produced for TV. All the series for which he wrote had various sponsors and the sponsors had their own watchdogs, people whose job it was to sift through scripts deleting any objectionable material. From one of his shows it was decided to paint out the Chrysler building which was fleetingly seen through a window - the sponsor was the Ford Motor Company. From another the words "lucky" and "American" were cut - the show was sponsored by a tobacco company who thought these "references" to rival cigarettes might inspire the viewers to think of other brands with those names. And if that seems ludicrous, consider this: from *Requiem*

PROBE 7 - OVER AND OUT

with Antoinette Bower and Richard Basehart

"One Colonel Cook, a traveller in space. He's landed on a remote planet several million miles from his point of departure. He can make an inventory of his plight by just one 360 degree movement of head and eyes. Colonel Cook has been set adrift in an ocean of space in a metal lifeboat that has been scorched and destroyed and will never fly again. He survived the crash but his ordeal is yet to begin. Now he must give battle to loneliness. Now, Colonel Cook must meet the unknown. It's a small planet set deep in space, but for Colonel Cook, it's *The Twilight Zone*."



for a *Heavyweight* line, "Got a match?" was cut because the sponsors, Ronson, objected to it!

However the straw that broke the camel's back was a show called *Noon on Doomsday* which was to be aired by the *United States Steel Hour*. The sponsor's raised so many objections that by the time it reached viewers it contained little of Serling's deep felt social commentary. Likewise, *A Town Has Turned to Dust* for *Playhouse 90* received the treatment. "They chopped it up like a roomful of butchers at work on a steer," Serling would later comment. But it is more than likely that the heavily doctored teleplay, *The Arena* for the *Studio One* series was what got Serling thinking in terms of presenting his ideas within the format of science fiction and fantasy. Of the rewriting of this political drama Serling would say, "In retrospect, I probably would have had a much more adult play had I made it science fiction, put it in the year 2057, and peopled the Senate with robots. This would probably be more reasonable and no less dramatically incisive."

Oddly enough, Serling didn't write an original story to get his *Twilight Zone* idea off the ground. Instead he polished up an old story he had written just after graduating college and although he was rapidly making a name for himself as a *wunderkind*, the script entitled *The Time Element* sat with Desilu for a year before it was produced. The critics weren't particularly unkind to the show and it generated a vast amount of mail and comment from the viewers who, apart from the likes of kiddy fare such as *Captain Video*, were starved of serious science fiction.

The interest generated by *The Time Element* prompted CBS to consider a fully-fledged pilot for *The Twilight Zone* and Serling dutifully wrote *The Happy Place*, a futuristic drama in which the populace are allowed to live no longer than 60 years. On reaching their sixtieth birthday they are sent to camps for routine extermination. This somewhat depressing concept was vetoed by the producers who, probably rightly, felt it too downbeat. Unperturbed, Serling constructed a new screenplay called *Where is Everybody?* This told the disorientating tale of Mike Ferris (played by Earl Holliman) who finds himself in a town where he cannot find another living being. The story ended with a twist, which would later become a *Twilight Zone* trademark. Ferris is revealed to be hallucinating, the result of a sensory deprivation experiment. Robert Stevens directed with his customary craftsmanship and the black and white images were crisply caught by ace Hollywood cinematographer Joseph La Shelle. Adding to the drama and seeming otherworldliness was the music of Bernard Herrmann, who, not that many years before had provided the score for *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. Herrmann also composed the *Twilight Zone* signature tune that was heard through most of the first series of the show, although it is the later shimmering notes of Marius Constant which most viewers recall. Serling's experiment in television fantasy worked and the first series of *The Twilight Zone* went into production.

If there was any single contributing factor to the success of *The Twilight Zone* apart from Serling himself, it was that the producer assigned to the show, Buck Houghton, made the most of Serling's input and worked closely with the dynamic writer. Houghton's background couldn't have been better for what Serling saw as *The Twilight Zone*, coming as he did from the Val Lewton production offices at RKO where he had worked as a script reader for Lewton as well as being involved on the



Opposite page: H. M. Wyant, Robin Hughes and John Carradine in *The Howling Man*. Above left: A scene from *One for the Angels*, featuring Ed Wynn. Above right: David Wayne takes his medicine in *Escape Clause*. Below: Stanley Adams and Buster Keaton in *Once Upon A Time*.



key productions *The Body Snatcher*, *Curse of the Cat People* and *Bedlam*. Houghton was also no stranger to the rigours of a tight television schedule, having had to produce 52 episodes in as many weeks of the fondly remembered (if only by me) *China Smith* with Dan Duryea in the early 50s. Houghton sensibly selected the MGM studios in which to shoot *Twilight Zone*. Not only did they have the best stocked scenery and prop docks in Hollywood but they also had some of the finest craftsmen in the movie capital on their payroll. *Twilight Zone* was truly off and running.

Of the first season of 36 episodes, Rod Serling scripted 27 – a phenomenal output even for the workaholic Serling. The writer quickly found that his mind worked faster than his fingers could pound the typewriter keys and he took to dictating his teleplays into a tape recorder and it was not uncommon for Serling to work a full seven days, 14 hours a day. As his wife recalls, "He would get up very early, grab a cup of coffee, and be out there at the crack of dawn. Often, if the weather was nice, he'd take the machine outside with him and sit by the pool."

Serling's great ability as a writer lay with his understanding of the television medium and the necessity not to overcrowd what is basically a very small canvas. The writer also understood the importance of using his characters as cyphers, to explore the strengths and weaknesses of the human spirit and to use irony as a means for the famous *Twilight Zone* twist endings. A good example of this is the episode *The Lonely*, directed by Jack Smight. Here's Serling's original introduction to the show:

"Witness if you will a dungeon, made out of mountains, salt flats and sand that stretch to infinity. The dungeon has an inmate: James A. Corry. And this is his residence: a metal shack. An old touring car that squats in the sun and goes nowhere – for there is nowhere to go. For the record let it be known that James A. Corry is a convicted criminal placed in solitary confinement. Confinement in this case stretches as far as the eye can see, because this



THE BRAIN CENTRE AT WHIPPLES

with Richard Deacon and Robby the Robot

"There are many bromides applicable here – too much of a good thing, tiger by the tail, as you sow so shall you reap. The point is that too often Man becomes clever instead of becoming wise, he becomes inventive but not thoughtful – and sometimes, as in the case of Mr Whipple, he can create himself right out of existence. Tonight's tale of oddness and obsolescence from *The Twilight Zone*."

particular dungeon is on an asteroid nine million miles from Earth. Now witness if you will a man's mind and body shrivelling in the sun, a man dying of loneliness."

Corry is serving a fifty year sentence for murder. The Captain of a supply ship (Richard Dehner) takes pity on the lonely man and on one of his trips leaves him a perfect replica robot woman, Alicia (played by Jean Marsh, still several years away from the hit series *Upstairs, Downstairs*). Corry is, at first, repulsed by the replicant but ultimately comes to love her. Nearly a year passes and the supply ship returns, but this time they are there to collect Corry who has been granted a pardon for his crime. However, he is only allowed to take away 15 pounds in weight, which of course rules out Alicia. Corry argues with the captain who, to prove that the "woman" is nothing more than a man-made creation, shoots Alicia in the face, revealing a mass of wires and circuits. On being told that all he is leaving behind is *loneliness*, Corry replies, "I must remember that. I must remember to keep that in mind."

The schedule for the episode was three days and it was originally planned to shoot it entirely in the wastes of Death Valley, one of the most forbidding landscapes on Earth. However after two days, with cast and crew succumbing to the 130 degree heat, the unit was moved into the MGM studios for the rest of the interior shots. Smight's direction in this, the first *Twilight Zone* episode (outside of the



Opposite page, top left: Suzanne Lloyd and Richard Conte in *Perchance to Dream*, written by Charles Beaumont. Top right: *Nehemiah Persoff* and *Ben Wright* in *Judgement Night*. Bottom left: *Robert Cummings* starred as *Captain James Embury* in *King Nine Will Not Return*. Bottom right: *Agnes Moorhead* in a scene from *The Invaders*. This page: Two make-up shots from *Eye of the Beholder*.

pilot) to be filmed, was tight and economical with Jack Warden as Corry giving a performance which genuinely captured the plight of a man literally dying of loneliness.

Rod Serling was contractually bound to write 80% of the first series, but he was also keen to ensure that the shows he didn't write lived up to those he did. He therefore drafted in two fine young writers for the bulk of the other episodes, Richard Matheson and Charles Beaumont, who wrote the remaining episodes, save for *The Chaser*, which was penned by Robert Presnell Jr., an adaptation of a John Collier short story. In Matheson and Beaumont, Serling had found the ideal talents to complement his own.

Of the two, Matheson is now the better known through his Roger Corman Poe adaptations which include *Fall of the House of Usher*, *Pit and the Pendulum*, *Tales of Terror*, and *The Raven*. He also co-scripted *Night of the Eagle* with Charles Beaumont and George Baxt, as well as writing the screenplays for his own novels *The (Incredible) Shrinking Man* and *Bid Time Return* (filmed as *Somewhere In Time*). He has recently written the script for the Spielberg/Landis production *Twilight Zone - The Movie*. Indeed, Matheson honed his craft while working on *The Twilight Zone* and like Serling himself was highly prolific. His stories, both in and out of the Zone run the gamut from whimsical fantasy through SF and near horror and his great strength of a writer of the fantastique lies in his ability to make the reader (or viewer) care for his characters. Current Golden Boy Stephen King has more than once sung his praises - he should, for King has used a Matheson staple on several occasions - that of setting his *frissons* within believable middle-American milieus and peopling his tales with common everyday folk to which very uncommon things happen. ►

"You're travelling through another dimension. A dimension, not only of sight and sound, but of mind. A journey into a wondrous land whose boundaries are that of imagination. Next stop, the Twilight Zone!"

THE TWILIGHT ZONE

15

THE TWILIGHT ZONE™ • DAN AYKROYD • ALBERT BROOKS • SCATMAN CROTHERS
JOHN LITHGOW • VIC MORROW • KATHLEEN QUINLAN

Executive Producer
FRANK MARSHALL

Music by
JERRY GOLDSMITH

Produced by
STEVEN SPIELBERG and JOHN LANDIS

PROLOGUE
and
SEGMENT I

SEGMENT II

SEGMENT III

SEGMENT IV

Written by

Story by

Based on a story by

Based on a story by

JOHN LANDIS

RICHARD MATHESON and JOSH ROGAN

RICHARD MATHESON

RICHARD MATHESON

Directed by

Screenplay by

Screenplay by

Screenplay by

JOHN LANDIS

and GEORGE CLAYTON JOHNSON

RICHARD MATHESON

RICHARD MATHESON

Directed by

Directed by

Directed by

STEVEN SPIELBERG

JOE DANTE

GEORGE MILLER

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7 PM CST

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SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON
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IN SELECTED WEST END CINEMAS FROM THURS. SEPT. 1st
AND AT A CINEMA NEAR YOU FROM THURS. SEPT. 8th



Where Matheson (through his background and lifestyle) embodies much of the common man in his work, the brief if prolific output of the late Charles Beaumont presents a somewhat darker side. Born in 1929 Beaumont lived what can only be described as an outre life. Laid low by spinal meningitis as a child Beaumont lost himself within the morbid world of Edgar Allen Poe, among others. His mother, apparently was somewhat unstable, given to dressing young Charles up as a girl and, on one occasion, sadistically killing one of his pets as a punishment for some childish misdemeanor. When his mother was considered too unstable to care for the child, Charles Beaumont was taken in by five aunts, all widowed, who owned a guest house in Washington State. As Beaumont explained in an interview in 1960, "Each night we had a ritual gathering around the stove and there I'd hear stories about the strange death of each of their husbands." This suitable, if certainly nightmarish background, would provide Beaumont with his essentially bleak and morbid view of the human condition which would permeate the bulk of his output.

Beaumont became interested in science fiction as a teenager and after a short spell trying his luck as an actor turned his hand to, at first SF illustration for the pulps and then writing. Interestingly, his agent for a time was *Famous Monsters* editor and now some-time *Starburst* contributor Forrest J Ackerman who recalls, "I consider it more a criticism of short sighted editors that they passed by most of the seventy-two stories (he had written), because eventually I think he sold every word he ever wrote. But in the beginning I couldn't give them away." In 1950, Beaumont struck lucky and sold his first story to *Playboy* magazine and he continued to sell his fiction throughout the rest of his tragically short life. The tale was called *The Devil, You Say* and it too was adapted to *The Twilight Zone*, turning up in the fourth season as *Printer's Devil*, scripted by Beaumont himself.

Beaumont's first brush with *The Twilight Zone* occurred in the first series with an episode entitled *Perchance to Dream* from his

Right: Burgess Meredith as Henry Bemis in Enough at Last. Top: Jean Carson pictured in the episode A Most Unusual Camera. Right: A radio active scene from the segment entitled Static. Far Right: William Tuttle, makeup artist, with his Venusians from Mr Dingle the Strong.

own short story of the same title. Its synopsis demonstrates both Beaumont's heart of darkness and Serling's desire to present within the framework of *The Twilight Zone* a variety of moods and stories. Edward Hall (played by Richard Conte) is a man suffering from a heart condition. He is also suffering from a series of dark dreams in which he sees a carnival dancer who seems to be luring him to his death. He visits a psychiatrist (John Larch) and tells him of his nocturnal terror. As he leaves he notices the doctors' receptionist, and guess what? She's the double of the dreaded dancer of his dreams. He runs screaming, back into the doc's office and throws himself out of the window to his death. The doctor buzzes the receptionist and she enters, to see Hall still on the crouch. The shrink explains that Hall just dozed off and moments later screamed and died – from an apparent heart attack. The strain of Hall's horror has proved too much for his weak heart!

The episode was directed by Robert Florey who helmed several *Zone* shows, and like producer Buck Houghton his background lay in the mists of the early atmospheric horror movies – *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* in 1932, Peter Lorre's extraordinary *Face Behind the Mask* in 1941 and perhaps most famously *The Beast With Five Fingers* in 1946. The careful selection of directors for *The Twilight Zone* series was another factor which greatly added to the show's quality and along with Serling's scripts, as well as his careful overseeing of other writer's work, no doubt added to the series longevity.

Houghton's choice of directors ranged from old, experienced hands such as John Brahm, who had such feature credits as *The Lodger* (1944) and the superb and now all but forgotten werewolf thriller *The Undying Monster* (1942) to solid Hollywood craftsmen like Ted "King of the Sequels" Post. Cult director Don Siegel, by then with *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) to his credit, even helmed a couple of episodes and many years later, amid the *Dirty Harry*-style policemen he is best known for, directed *The Beguiled* (1971) a story which would have not been out of place in *The Twilight Zone* itself. Richard Donner, who years later would direct the first *Superman* movie also cut his teeth on *Zone* shows as did Lamont Johnson who would prove an interesting if erratic talent in later years. Despite the crippling schedules – three days rehearsal and three days shooting, *The Twilight Zone* never betrayed the quality with which Serling imbued every episode. (Continued on Page 28)

STEEL

with Lee Marvin, Tippi Heclett (as the robot McClure) and Joe Mantell
"Portrait of a losing side, proof positive that you can't outpunch machinery. Proof also of something else: that no matter what the future brings, Man's capacity to rise to the occasion will remain unaltered. His potential for tenacity and optimism, as always, to outfight, outpoint and outlive any and all changes made by his society, for which three cheers and an unanimous decision rendered from *The Twilight Zone*."



THE TWILIGHT ZONE

TWILIGHT ZONE EPISODE GUIDE

Unless otherwise noted, Writer (W) is Rod Serling. Other writers (and directors) will only be identified in their first listing by their full name. Subsequent mentions will only list surname.

KEY: W = Writer
 •• D = Director
 LP = Leading players

FIRST SEASON: 1959-1960

WHERE IS EVERYBODY?

D: Robert Stevens
 LP: Earl Holliman, James Gregory

ONE FOR THE ANGELS

D: Robert Parrish
 LP: Ed Wynn, Murray Hamilton

MR. DENTON ON DOOMSDAY

D: Alan Reisner
 LP: Dan Durys, Martin Landau

THE SIXTEEN MILLIMETER SHRINE

D: Mitchell Leisen
 LP: Ida Lupino, Martin Balsam

WALKING DISTANCE

D: Stevens
 LP: Gig Young, Frank Overton

ESCAPE CLAUSE

D: Leisen
 LP: David Wayne, Thomas Gomez

ISHOT AN ARROW INTO THE AIR

D: Stuart Rosenberg
 LP: Edward Binns, Dewey Martin

THE HITCH-HIKER

D: Alvin Ganzer
 LP: Inger Stevens, Leonard Strong

THE FEVER

D: Robert Florey
 LP: Everett Sloane, Bibi Janiss

THE LAST FLIGHT

W: Richard Matheson
 D: William Claxton
 LP: Kenneth Haigh, Alexander Scourby

THE PURPLE TESTAMENT

D: Richard Bare
 LP: William Reynolds, Dick York

ELEGY

W: Charles Beaumont
 D: Douglas Heyes
 LP: Cecil Kellaway, Jeff Morrow

MIRROR IMAGE

D: John Brahm
 LP: Vera Miles, Martin Milner

THE MONSTERS ARE DUE ON MAPLE STREET

D: Ron Winston
 LP: Claude Akins, Jack Weston

THE LONELY

D: Jack Smight
 LP: Jack Warden, Jean Marsh

TIME ENOUGH AT LAST

D: Brahm
 LP: Burgess Meredith, Jacqueline DeWitt

PERCHANCE TO DREAM

W: Beaumont
 D: Robert Florey
 LP: Richard Conte, John Larch

JUDGEMENT NIGHT

D: Brahm
 LP: Nehemiah Persoff, Ben Wright

AND WHEN THE SKY WAS OPENED

D: Heyes
 LP: Rod Taylor, Charles Aidman

WHAT YOU NEED

D: Ganzer
 LP: Steve Cochran, Ernest Truex

THE FOUR OF US ARE DYING

D: Brahm
 LP: Harry Townes, Beverly Garland

THIRD FROM THE SUN

D: Bare
 LP: Fritz Weaver, Joe Maross

A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

W: Matheson
 D: Ted Post
 LP: Howard Duff, Eileen Ryan

LONG LIVE WALTER JAMESON

W: Beaumont
 D: Anton Leader
 LP: Kevin McCarthy, Estelle Winwood

PEOPLE ARE ALIKE ALL OVER

D: Leisen
 LP: Roddy McDowall, Susan Oliver

EXECUTION

D: David Orrick McDermion
 LP: Albert Salmi, Russell Johnson

THE BIG, TALL WISH

D: Winston
 LP: Ivan Dixon, Steve Perry

A NICE PLACE TO VISIT

W: Beaumont
 D: Brahm
 LP: Larry Blyden, Sebastian Cabot

NIGHTMARE AS CHILD

D: Ganzer
 LP: Janice Rule, Terry Burnham

ASTOP AT WILLUGHBY

D: Parrish
 LP: James Daly, Howard Smith

THE CHASER

W: Robert Presnell, Jr.
 D: Heyes
 LP: George Grizzard, John McIntire

A PASSAGE FOR TRUMPET

D: Don Medford
 LP: Jack Klugman, Mary Webster

MR. BEVIS

D: William Asher
 LP: Orson Bean, Henry Jones

THE AFTER HOURS

D: Heyes
 LP: Anne Francis, Elizabeth Allen

THE MIGHTY CASEY

D: Parrish Ganzer
 LP: Jack Warden, Robert Sorrells

A WORLD OF HIS OWN

W: Matheson
 D: Ralph Nelson
 LP: Keenan Wynn, Phyllis Kirk

SECOND SEASON: 1960-61

KING NINE WILL NOT RETURN

D: Buzz Kulik
 LP: Robert Cummings, Gene Lyons

THE MAN IN THE BOTTLE

D: Medford
 LP: Luther Adler, Lisa Golm

NERVOUS MAN IN A FOUR DOLLAR ROOM

D: Heyes
 LP: Joe Mantell, William D. Gordon

ATHING ABOUT MACHINES

D: McDermion
 LP: Richard Haydn, Barbara Stuart

THE HOWLING MAN

W: Beaumont
 D: Heyes
 LP: H.M. Wynant, John Carradine

THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

D: Heyes
 LP: William B. Gordon, Donna Douglas

NICK OF TIME

W: Matheson
 D: Bare
 LP: William Shatner, Patricia Breslin

THE LATENESS OF THE HOUR

D: Smight
 LP: Inger Stevens, John Hoyt

THE TROUBLE WITH TEMPLETON

W: E. Jack Neuman
 D: Kulik
 LP: Brian Aherne, Pippa Scott

A MOST UNUSUAL CAMERA

D: John Rich
 LP: Fred Clark, Adam Williams

NIGHT OF THE MEEK

D: Smight
 LP: Art Carney, Meg Wyllie

DUST

D: Heyes
 LP: Thomas Gomez, John Larch

BACK THERE

D: McDermion
 LP: Russell Johnson, Paul Hartman

THE WHOLE TRUTH

D: James Sheldon
 LP: Jack Carson, Arnie Johnson

THE INVADERS

W: Matheson
 D: Heyes
 LP: Agnes Moorhead

A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

W: George Clayton Johnson
 D: Sheldon
 LP: Dick York, Dan Tobin

TWENTY TWO

D: Smight
 LP: Barbara Nichols, Jonathon Harris

THE ODYSSEY OF FLIGHT 33

D: Justus Addiss
 LP: John Anderson, Paul Comi

DEATHS-HEAD REVISITED

D: Medford
 LP: Joseph Schildkraut, Chuck Fox

THE MIDNIGHT SUN

D: Anton Leader
 LP: Lois Nettleton, Jason Wingreen

STILL VALLEY

D: Sheldon
 LP: Gary Merrill, Vaughn Taylor

THE JUNGLE

W: Beaumont
 D: Claxton
 LP: John Dehner, Walter Brooke

ONCE UPON A TIME

W: Matheson
 D: Norman Z. McLeod
 LP: Buster Keaton, Gil Lamb

FIVE CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN EXIT

D: Johnson
 LP: William Windom, Susan Harrison

A QUALITY OF MERCY

D: Kulik
 LP: Dean Stockwell, Albert Salmi

NOTHING IN THE DARK

W: G.C. Johnson
 D: L. Johnson
 LP: Gladys Cooper, Robert Redford

ONE MORE PALLBEARER

D: Johnson
 LP: Joseph Wiseman, Gage Clark

MR DINGLE THE STRONG

D: Brahm
 LP: Burgess Meredith, Don Rickles

STATIC

W: Beaumont
 D: Kulik
 LP: Dean Jagger, Robert Emhardt

THE PRIME MOVER

W: Beaumont
 D: Bare
 LP: Dane Clark, Buddy Ebsen

LONG DISTANCE CALL

W: Beaumont & William Idelson
 D: Sheldon
 LP: Billy Mumy, Philip Abbott

A HUNDRED YEARS OVER THE RIM

D: Kulik
 LP: Cliff Robertson, Miranda Jones

THERIP VAN WINKLE CAPER

D: Addiss
 LP: Oscar Beregi, Simon Oakland

THE SILENCE

D: Boris Sagal
 LP: Franchot Tone, Liam Sullivan

SHADOW PLAY

W: Beaumont
 D: Brahm
 LP: Dennis Weaver, Harry Townes

THE MIND AND THE MATTER

D: Kulik
 LP: Shelley Berman, Jeanne Wood

WILL THE REAL MARTIN PLEASE STAND UP

D: Montgomery Pittman
 LP: John Hoyt, Jack Elam

THE OBSOLETE MAN

D: Elliott Silverstein
 LP: Burgess Meredith, Fritz Weaver

THIRD SEASON: 1961-1962

TWO

W & D: Pittman
 LP: Elizabeth Montgomery, Charles Bronson

THE ARRIVAL

D: Sagal
 LP: Harold J. Stone, Bing Russell

THE SHELTER

D: Lamont Johnson
 LP: Larry Gates, Jack Albertson

THE PASSERBY

D: Silverstein
 LP: Joanne Linville, James Gregory

A GAME OF POOL

W: G.C. Johnson
 D: Kulik
 LP: Jack Klugman, Jonathan Winters

THE DIRECTORS

Feature by Phil Edwards

George Miller, in the space of only three years, has become one of the most accomplished film makers. Born in Chinchilla in Queensland, Australia, Miller forsook his chosen profession as a doctor to enter the somewhat more uncertain world of film making. In 1977 he attended a Summer film workshop conducted by the Australian Union of Students in Melbourne. The event marked a drastic change in his life. It was here that he met Byron Kennedy. The two became firm friends and finally business partners.

Kennedy and Miller commenced their film making association with a series of short experimental movies of which *Violence In The Cinema... Part One* caused something of a stir in its satirical look at a subject which had long been the bane of the Australian film censors. Miller's first feature would further upset these guardians of public sensibilities in 1980. Unable to raise backing from the various federal and state film commissions for his film *Mad Max*, Miller turned to friends from his old profession for support.

Mad Max burst upon the film scene in Australia like a breath of fiery carbon monoxide air, winning a combination of rave reviews for its sense of pure cinematic exhilaration and an equal number of brickbats for its seemingly casual view of no-holds-barred, gut-wrenching violence. Although failing at the American box office (probably more due to a thoughtless ad campaign and the unnecessary dubbing into trans-Atlantic-ese which made it sound like a third rate Spaghetti Western) *Mad Max* rapidly became a cult hit throughout Europe and Japan. It should be noted that the film was originally slapped with an X rating in France, something usually reserved for hard core sex films. The Japanese saw in *max* a

George Miller Director *Nightmare at 20,000 Feet*



modern day Samurai hero and the film's star, Mel Gibson found himself an idol overnight in that country.

With *Mad Max 2*, Miller consolidated his position as a virtuoso director of hard hitting action sequences and proved that between the two *Max* features he had learned his craft more than well. Released in America as *The Road Warrior* and sans the simply awful dubbing which had destroyed *Mad Max*, the film was lauded by critics and Miller's contemporaries alike. If Steven Spielberg has a serious rival in his understanding of the plasticity of the film medium then it's George Miller.

With the enormous profits generated by the two *Mad Max* features Kennedy and Miller set up their own film making facility in an old cinema in Sydney's King's Cross, once the haven of artists and hookers alike. It was from here that they set about making their most ambitious production to date, *The Dismissal*. A television mini-series, it details

the fall of the Whitlam Labour government with each leading episode being directed by a leading Australian film maker, including Miller himself.

With *Mad Max 2* being such a success it was no surprise to anybody that Miller should find Hollywood offers coming his way. Rumours abounded: Miller was to direct a spectacular motorbike chase for Spielberg's second Indiana Jones movie; Miller was slated to direct the third *Raiders* adventure; Miller was going to finally make his homage to Brian DePalma, *Roxanne* (*Carrie* is reportedly the Australian's favourite film); Miller was not interested in making a third *Mad Max*; Miller was going to make another saga with the existential hero and so on.

Miller went to Hollywood where he was signed by Spielberg and Landis, joint producers of *The Twilight Zone*, to helm the last episode in the omnibus feature, *Nightmare at 20,000 Feet*. And it is Miller's episode which is garnering the majority of critical praise.

With *The Twilight Zone* successfully behind him, Miller returned to Australia to continue with his own projects. First up is another mini-series this time about the infamous Bodyline Test Cricket series of 1932-33, a project which is also consuming the energies of England's David Puttnam (producer of *Chariots Of Fire*) who is producing the strange story for the cinema screen. Kennedy/Miller have also announced that *Mad Max 3* will out-*Max* 1 and 2. Shooting starts in June 1984, although Miller has evinced a desire to get away from the white-line nightmares of the first two films and may only direct the action sequences, giving someone else the responsibility of taking care of business in the other departments.





Joe Dante should be a source of inspiration for any fantasy film journalist who dreams of making films themselves. Born in New Jersey, Dante was bewitched by the cinema of the weird and wonderful from an early age and like so many of his contemporaries grew up on the early issues of Forry J Ackerman's *Famous Monsters* and the 50s output of such studios as American International and Universal. When old enough – probably when he could first hold a pen – he wrote for Uncle Forry and contributed articles to *Castle of Frankenstein*. His infamous piece, *Dante's Inferno*, in which he made no-holds-barred statements about fantasy films, still makes incredibly entertaining reading.

After pursuing a film journalistic career following graduation in 1968 he took up the position of editor of *Film Bulletin*. But Dante wasn't satisfied writing about films – he wanted to make them as well. In 1974 he landed a position in Roger Corman's New World Pictures set-up in California through an old college friend Jon Davison, with whom he had concocted *The Movie Orgy*, a seven hour feast of film which played college campuses through the sponsorship of Schlitz beer.

Like so many then-aspiring and now-successful directors, Joe Dante learned his craft from the whily Corman. For two years he devised and edited trailers and ad

Joe Dante Director It's A Good Life



campaigns for such schlockers as *Big Bad Mama*, *Deathrace 2000*, *Tidal Wave* and *Starcrash*. And then came *The Big Break*, or put another way, Roger Corman said, "Here's two bucks – make a movie for me." Dante teamed with editing partner Allan Arkush and the two co-directed *Hollywood Boulevard*, a send-up of cheap-skate New World pictures, for \$60,000. Of course it made money and Corman let Dante loose again, this time on his own.

Piranha, sporting one of John Sayles' typically witty and knowing scripts, assured Dante of a future. Though New World had dished out the dough to Dante to make a *Jaws* swipe, the director turned in a deftly crafted horror film which contained enough good humour to ensure that the gore

quotient never outweighed the entertainment value and gave Dante a chance to pay homage to one of his old idols, Jack Arnold.

With *Piranha* biting chunks out of the box office, Dante next turned his sights (and silver bullets) to the legend of the werewolf. Again scripted by Sayles, *The Howling* was even more good-naturedly scary than *Piranha* and contained enough in-jokes to keep Forry Ackerman himself guessing – it even contained Ackerman, flaunting a copy of *Famous Monsters*. *The Howling* also featured some early work by *The Thing's* monster maker Rob Bottin, protégé of Rick Baker, and pre-empted Baker's superior effect's in Landis' *An American Werewolf in London*. Bottin's bladders may have been bigger but Baker's bladders were better.

For *The Twilight Zone*, Dante was originally slated for the Miller episode, *Nightmare at 20,000 Feet*. In the various reshufflings that take place during the setting up of a production as complex as that of *The Twilight Zone*, Dante is now responsible for *It's A Good Life*.

Following the completion of his episode, Joe Dante immediately went into production on *Gremlins* under the aegis of Steven Spielberg's company. Advance reports indicate that the film will return the highly talented Dante to the world of humorous horror.

John Landis made a monkey of himself at the age of 21. Or rather let his long-time friend, Rick Baker, construct a gorilla suit for the writer/director to wear in his first film, *Schlock* in 1972.

Prior to that Big John had worked his way around Europe as a stuntman in a variety of Spaghetti and Sauerkraut westerns after finishing up chores as a "gopher" on Brian Hutton's WW2 comedy-actioner *Kelly's Heroes*. And prior to that he'd emptied out-trays for one of Hollywood's bigger studios as an office boy.

The award-winning *Schlock* brought Landis to the attention of the producers of *Kentucky Fried Movie* and the then (and still) ridiculously-talented-for-his-age film maker scored his first commercial hit. With success begetting success, the way it sometimes does in Hollywoodland, John found himself hired to helm *National Lampoon's Animal House*, which introduced the small-screen, big talent of John Belushi to the world and in so doing created a cult and, as a by-product, the most successful film comedy of all time.

Belushi and his *Saturday Night Live* partner Danny Aykroyd had been winning additional underground fame as The Blues Brothers. Their first album, *A Briefcase Full of Blues*, went platinum overnight. *Saturday Night Live* was topping the ratings and Landis was HOT with round-the-block queues to see *Animal House*. Hollywood execs being Hollywood execs put two and two together and got one hundred million dollars. So, with this kind of corporate arithmetic, *The Blues Brothers* movie came about. The film was rushed into production without a final budget and the movie just grew and grew.

John Landis Director Prologue/Segment 1



Despite many rumours to the contrary, *The Blues Brothers* proved a huge financial success for Universal and with the unlimited resources of a major studio at his disposal, Landis showed that he was indeed a talent to be reckoned with. *The Blues Brothers* fairly bristles with a wealth of comedic ideas and displays Landis' razzle-dazzle style of film making to the full.

Landis next turned his talents to *An American Werewolf in London*, a story he had first concocted as early as 1968. The unusual idea of a horror film that was played

straight yet contained a strong element of humour hadn't proved too popular with the numerous producers that Landis had sent his script to over the years. But with 3 smash hit films in a row, Polygram Pictures backed *American Werewolf*. Unsurprisingly, under Landis' sure and understanding hand, the movie fulfilled all expectations, winning good reviews from even the severest critics. Rick Baker's make-up effects were nothing short of extraordinary and he deservedly won an Oscar for his contribution.

For *The Twilight Zone* Landis, as well as writing and directing his episode, also devised and directed the framing story which stars Dan Aykroyd and Harvey Brooks.

On completion of his work on *The Twilight Zone*, during which the fatal helicopter accident took place, John Landis threw himself into work on *Trading Places*, a highly satirical comedy. Resembling a cross between a Frank Capra "social awareness" tragi-comedy and the best of Preston Sturges (screwball style), the film displayed in Landis work a new maturity. With Eddie Murphy, fresh from *Saturday Night Live* and the success of *48 Hours* and Danny Aykroyd it became an instant hit and continues to keep the cash registers jangling at the box office. Also worth noting is the performance of Jamie Lee Curtis – one would have never guessed that the lady was so talented from the run of slash and stalk thrillers she had been condemned to following the success of *Halloween*.

John Landis has several more films in various stages of preparation, including *Clue* (based on the popular Parker Bros game), *Dick Tracy* and the director's long-cherished, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.





There's a certain amount of irony connected with Steven Spielberg's participation as producer and director on *The Twilight Zone*. For it was another creation of Zone mastermind Rod Serling which gave Boy Wonder his first professional break in the form of the pilot TV movie of *Night Gallery*.

Spielberg served his apprenticeship by putting the likes of Peter Falk and Robert Young through their paces in such popular TV series as *Columbo* and *Marcus Welby, MD*. He also helmed the above average telemovies *Something Evil* and *Savage*; but it was the highly regarded television film *Duel*, based on Richard Matheson's short story for *Playboy* which led to the director making the break from the small to the big screen and a series of successes which have placed him as the top money making director of all time.

Released theatrically throughout Europe, with additional footage, *Duel* rapidly captured a cult reputation, fired in part by *Sunday Times* critic Dyllis Powell's enthusiasm. Spielberg was on his way in a career which can only be described as genuinely meteoric.

The moderately successful *The Sugarland Express* followed, but it was Bruce the Shark, star of *Jaws* which assured Spielberg of his place in the Hollywood Hall of Fame. The 1975 production grossed somewhere in the vicinity of \$400 million worldwide, but more importantly than this financial consideration, *Jaws* showed that Spielberg was a film maker who not only understood the medium in which he worked – he revelled in it.

Close Encounters of the Third Kind (in

Steven Spielberg Director *Kick the Can*



either its original or 'Special' edition) further consolidated his position as *numero uno* and revealed the director's now famous (and well publicised) "sense of wonder". With everything he touched turning to gold, the last thing on Steven Spielberg's mind was a flop. But that's what his next film, *1941*, turned out to be.

The failure of *1941* cannot be put down to any one reason, rather it's a combination of several. By this time Spielberg's manic attention to even the most minute of details was becoming legendary and reached new heights on the WW2 comedy. Certainly *1941*

is considerably overblown in all departments and the director's lack of understanding that for a comedy to work it must build to zaniness. *1941* started at lunatic level and just stayed there. There is also the aspect that at the time of its release there were still a group of hostages held in the American Embassy in Iran and feelings of patriotism were running at a high level. Not an opportune time to release a film which parodied patriotism, but with a final price tag of something like \$40 million attached to it, Columbia Pictures couldn't bid their time and wait for a more favourable political climate. The film landed at the box office like some giant lead turkey. Suddenly Boy Wonder was considered not so wonderful by Hollywood.

But George Lucas bailed him out when he connected with Spielberg to make *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. This entertaining pastiche of 101 old Republic serials mined real box office gold and put the director back on top. It also guaranteed that Spielberg would get to make *E.T. The Extraterrestrial*. And if you don't know about *E.T.* and its success, then you must be a recently landed alien yourself.

While embroiled in the production of the *Cute One's* adventures on Earth, Spielberg found time to produce and generally oversee production of *Polygeist*, an effects-laden shocker finally credited to director Tobe Hooper.

For *The Twilight Zone*, Spielberg chose to film a remake of the Zone episode, "Kick the Can". With that in the can, Spielberg is once again putting Harrison Ford through hoops and in the path of all manner of rolling destruction and danger in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. ■

THE MIRROR
D: Medford
LP: Peter Falk, Richard Karlan

THE GRAVE
W & D: Pittman
LP: Lee Marvin, Strother Martin

IT'S A GOOD LIFE
D: Sheldon
LP: Billy Mumy, Cloris Leachman

DEAD MAN'S SHOES
W: Beaumont & O'Casey Rich
D: Pittman
LP: Warren Stevens, Ben Wright

THE HUNT
D: Earl Hamner Jr.
D: Harold Schuster
LP: Arthur Hunnicutt, Jeanette Nolan

SHOWDOWN WITH RANCE McCREW
D: Christian Nyby
LP: Larry Blyden, Arth Johnson

KICK THE CAN
W: G.C. Johnson
D: L. Johnson
LP: Ernest Truex, Russell Collins

APIANO IN THE HOUSE
W: Hamner Jr.
D: David Greene
LP: Berry Morse, Joan Hackett

TO SERVE A MAN
D: Bare
LP: Richard Kiel, Lloyd Bochner

THE LAST RITES OF JEFF MYRTLEBANK
W & D: Pittman
LP: James Best, Sherry Jackson

THE FUGITIVE
W: Beaumont
D: Bare
LP: J. Pat O'Malley, Nancy Kulp

LITTLE GIRL LOST
W: Matheson
D: Paul Stewart
LP: Sarah Marshall, Charles Aidman

PERSON OR PERSONS UNKNOWN
W: Beaumont
D: Brahm
LP: Richard Long, Frank Silvera

THE GIFT
D: Allan H. Miner
LP: Geoffrey Horne, Paul Mazursky

THE LITTLE PEOPLE
D: Claxton
LP: Joe Maross, Claude Akins

FUR O'CLOCK
D: Johnson
LP: Theodore Bikel, Phyllis Love

THE TRADE-INS
D: Silverstein
LP: Joseph Schildkraut, Alma Platt

HOCUS FOCUS AND FRISBY
D: Johnson
LP: Andy Devine, Milton Selzer

THE DUMMY
D: Abner Biberman
LP: Cliff Robertson, Sandra Warner

THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD
D: Robert Ellis Miller
LP: Donald Pleasance, Philippa Beans

YOUNG MAN'S FANCY
W: Matheson
D: Brahm
LP: Phyllis Thaxter, Wallace Rooney

ISING THE BODY ELECTRIC
W: Ray Bradbury
D: Sheldon & Claxton
LP: Josephine Hutchinson, Veronica Cartwright

CAVENDER IS COMING
D: Nyby
LP: Carol Burnett, Howard Smith

FOURTH SEASON: JANUARY
1963-MAY 1963

For this eighteen episode run (approximately only half of a regular U.S. season series Twilight Zone experimented with an hour long format—the shows were about 50 minutes in length, with approximately ten minutes reserved for sponsor's advertising. But when a drop off in ratings resulted it was decided to return the show to its original half-hour (25 minutes plus 5 for ads) format which was certainly more suited to Serling's "sting-in-the-tail" concept.

IN HIS IMAGE
W: Beaumont
D: Perry Lafferty
LP: George Grizzard, Katherine Squire

THE THIRTY-FATHOM GRAVE
D: Lafferty
LP: Mike Kellin, Bill Bixby

MUTE
W: Matheson
D: Rosenberg
LP: Frank Overton, Ann Jillian

JESS-BELLE
W: Hamner Jr.
D: Kulik
LP: Anne Francis, James Best

DEATH SHIP
W: Matheson
D: Medford
LP: Jack Klugman, Ross Martin

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW
W: Beaumont
D: Lafferty
LP: Ed Nelson, James Doohan

HE'S ALIVE
D: Rosenberg
LP: Dennis Hopper, Curt Conway

MINIATURE
W: Beaumont
D: Walter Grauman
LP: Robert Duvall, Barbara Barrie

PRINTER'S DEVIL
W: Beaumont
D: Ralph Senensky
LP: Burgess Meredith, Patricia Crowley

NO TIME LIKE THE PAST
D: Addiss
LP: Dana Andrews, Patricia Breslin

THE PARALLEL
D: Alan Crosland
LP: Steve Forrest, Jacqueline Scott

IDREAM OF GENIE
W: John Furia Jr.
D: Robert Gist
LP: Howard Morris, Loring Smith

THE NEW EXHIBIT
W: Jerry Sohl
D: Brahm
LP: Martin Balsam, Maggie Mahoney

OF LATE I THINK OF CLIFFORDVILLE
D: David Lowell Rich
LP: Albert Salmi, Julie Newmar

THE INCREDIBLE WORLD OF HORACE FORD
W: Reginald Rose
D: Biberman
LP: Pat Hingle, Phillip Pine

ON THURSDAY WE LEAVE FOR HOME
D: Kulik
LP: James Whitmore, Russ Bender

PASSAGE ON THE LADY ANNE
W: Beaumont
D: Johnson
LP: Wilfrid Hyde-White, Gladys Cooper

THE BARD
D: David Butler
LP: Jack Weston, John Williams

FIFTH SEASON 1963-1964 (Return to half-hour format)

IN PRAISE OF PIP
D: Joseph M. Newman
LP: Jack Klugman, Billy Mumy

STEEL
W: Matheson
D: Don Weis
LP: Lee Marvin, Joe Mantell

NIGHTMARE AT 20,000 FEET
W: Matheson
D: Richard Donner
LP: William Shatner, Nick Cravat

A KIND OF STOPWATCH
D: John Rich
LP: Richard Erdman, Leon Belasco

A SHORT DRINK FROM A CERTAIN FOUNTAIN
D: Bernard Girard
LP: Patrick O'Neill, Rula Lee

THE LAST NIGHT OF A JOCKEY
D: Newman
LP: Mickey Rooney

LIVING DOLL
W: Jerry Sohl (although credited to Beaumont)
D: Richard Sarafian
LP: Telly Savalas, Mary LaRoche

THE OLD MAN IN THE CAVE
D: Alan Crosland Jr.
LP: James Coburn, John Anderson

UNCLE SIMON
D: Don Siegel
LP: Constance Ford, Sir Cedric Hardwicke

NIGHT CALL
W: Matheson
D: Jacques Tourneur
LP: Gladys Cooper, Martine Bartlett

PROBE 7—OVER AND OUT
D: Post
LP: Richard Basehart, Antoinette Bower

THE 7th IS MADE UP OF PHANTOMS
D: Crosland Jr.
LP: Warren Oates, Ron Foster

NINETY YEARS WITHOUT SLUMBERING
W: Richard deRoy
D: Roger Kay
LP: Ed Wynn, James Callahan

RING-A-DING GIRL
W: Hamner Jr.
D: Crosland Jr.
LP: Maggie McNamara, Mary Munday

SOUNDS AND SILENCES
D: Richard Donner
LP: John McGiver, Penny Singleton

YOU DRIVE
W: Hamner Jr.
D: Brahm
LP: Edward Andrews, Kevin Hagen

NUMBER 12 LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU
W: John Tomerlin (although credited to Beaumont)
D: Biberman
LP: Richard Long, Suzy Parker

THE LONG MORROW
D: Florey
LP: Robert Lansing, George MacReady

THE SELF-IMPROVEMENT OF SALVADORE ROSS
W: Jerry McNeely
D: Siegel
LP: Don Gordon, Vaughn Taylor

BLACK LEATHER JACKETS
W: Hamner Jr.
D: Newman
LP: Shelley Fabares, Lee Kinsolving

FROM AGNES—WITH LOVE
W: Bernard C. Schoenfeld
D: Donner
LP: Wally Cox, Sue Randall

SPUR OF THE MOMENT
W: Matheson
D: Silverstein
LP: Marsha Hunt, Diana Hyland

STOPOVER IN A QUIET ROOM
W: Hamner Jr.
D: Winston
LP: Nancy Malone, Barry Nelson

QUEEN OF THE NILE
W: Jerry Sohl (although credited to Beaumont)
D: Brahm
LP: Lee Philips, Ann Blyth

THE ENCOUNTER
W: Goldsmith
D: Butler
LP: Neville Brand, George Takei

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?
W: Martin Goldsmith
D: Richard Beer
LP: Joan Blondell, Sterling Holloway

THE MASKS
SD: Ida Lupino
LP: Robert Keith, Virginia Gregg

I AM THE NIGHT—COLOUR ME BLACK
D: Biberman
LP: Paul Fix, Michal Constantine

CAESAR AND ME
W: A.T. Strassfeld
D: Robert Butler
LP: Jackie Cooper, Susanne Cupito

THE JEOPARDY ROOM
D: Donner
LP: Martin Landau, Robert Keljian

MR GARRITY AND THE GRAVES
D: Post
LP: J. Pat O'Malley, John Dehner

THE BRAIN CENTRE AT WHIPPLES
D: Donner
LP: Richard Deacon, Paul Newlan & Robby the Robot

COME WANDER WITH ME
W: Anthony Wilson
D: Donner
LP: Bonnie Beecher, Gary Crosby

THE FEAR
D: Post
LP: Mark Richman, Hazel Court

THE BEWITCHIN' POOL
W: Hamner
LP: Tim Stafford, Mary Badham

Last Episode: (only shown twice in history of T.2.)

AN OCCURRENCE AT OWL CREEK BRIDGE
W & D: Robert Enrico
LP: Roger Jacquet, Anne Cornaly

Certainly not every instalment of *The Twilight Zone* was a masterpiece, but for a series which spanned five seasons and 152 episodes, it scored a remarkably high average for quality in all departments. On several occasions *The Twilight Zone* reached heights that other fantasy orientated shows could only ever aspire to. For when *The Twilight Zone* was on form, it was nothing short of brilliant. Take, for example, the episode *The Invaders* in which Agnes Moorhead played a lone woman in a desolate farmhouse. On hearing a noise coming from the roof she investigates and discovers a miniature flying saucer from which emerge two, silvery miniature robots. The woman is attacked by the creatures and a terrifying battle takes place in which the woman is ultimately victorious...but let's leave the "set-up" of Serling's opening narration set the scene properly:

"This is one of the out of the way places, the unvisited places, bleak, wasted, dying. This is a farmhouse, handmade, crude, a house without electricity or gas, a house untouched by progress. This is the woman who lives in the house, a woman who's been alone for many years, a strong, simple woman whose only problem up until this moment has been that of acquiring enough food to eat, a woman about to face terror which is even now coming at her from...the *Twilight Zone*."

THE TWILIGHT ZONE

THE TV SHOW Part 2

Agnes Moorhead gave a bravura, wordless performance of great conviction ("Where's my part?" she asked producer Houghton, on reading the script; in this Matheson-scribed tale of terror. But as always with *The Twilight Zone*, the sting was most definitely in the tale, for as the besieged Moorhead destroys the mini-UFO and the enclosed, remaining alien sends a message of warning for future invaders, the camera zeros in on the side of the ship. It reads, "U.S. Air Force". Trivia buffs should note that the flying saucer used in the show was the good ol' C57D from *Forbidden Planet*!

To enumerate all the great episodes of *The Twilight Zone* would indeed fill a book (and they do) but it's worth mentioning one or two more before we close this (all but) inadequate retrospective on the classic TV series. *Little Girl Lost* has been pointed out as one of the generic roots of the Spielberg/Hooper horror movie *Polyester*. Based on Richard Matheson's short story which originally appeared in his fantasy anthology *The Shores of Space*, published by Bantam Books in 1957, it told the story of a young girl who disappears into another dimension when she crawls under her bed. The family dog goes the same way, as does her father when he goes "in search" of her, but all are saved when a physicist friend manages to pull them out, just before the hole to the other dimension closes up, apparently for good. According to Matheson, who also



PEOPLE ARE ALIKE ALL OVER

with Roddy McDowall and Susan Oliver

"Species of animal brought back alive.

Interesting similarity in physical characteristics to human beings in head, trunk, arms, legs, hands, feet. Very tiny undeveloped brain; comes from a primitive planet called Earth. Calls himself Samuel Conrad. And he will remain here in his cage with the running water and the electricity and the central heat as long as he lives.

Samuel Conrad has found The *Twilight Zone*."

Above: Santa Claus, alias Art Carney, in *Night of the Meek*. Centre: A scene from the last episode, entitled *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*. Far right: Robin Hughes as *The Howling Man*.

wrote the teleplay, "That was based on an occurrence that happened to our daughter. She didn't go into the fourth dimension, but she cried one night and I went to where she was and couldn't find her anywhere. I couldn't find her on the bed, I couldn't find her on the ground. She had fallen off and rolled all the way under the bed against the wall. At first, when I felt under the bed, I couldn't reach her. It was bizarre, and that's where I got the idea."

Matheson was also responsible for another more than memorable episode, *Nightmare at 20,000 Feet* which had originally appeared in his collection of horror stories, *Alone By Night* published by Ballantine in 1961 and later reprinted in *Shock 3* (Dell, 1966) and still available. This fifth season show, tautly directed by Richard Donner, told the story of Bob Wilson (played by Captain Kirk-to-be, William Shatner) and his wife Ruth (Christine White) on what starts out to be a simple plane trip. Just after take-off, Wilson looks out of his window and sees a small furry creature tampering with one of the plane's engines. He wakes his dozing wife, but of course when she looks out, she sees nothing. Then it happens again. Obviously becoming distraught, Wilson tries to alert the crew to the "gremlin". They think he is a crackpot and ignore his warnings. In one brilliant shock, Wilson pulls down the shutter of his window, desperately trying to

OF LATE I THINK OF CLIFFORDVILLE

with Albert Salmi and Julie Newman

"Witness a murder. The killer is Mr William Feather-Smith, a robber baron whose body composition is made up of a refrigeration plant covered by thick skin. In a moment, Mr Feather-Smith will proceed on his daily course of conquest and calumny with yet another business dealing. But this will be one of those bizarre transactions that take place in an odd marketplace known as The Twilight Zone."



believe that he has imagined it. But he can't resist another look and pulls the blind up, only to find himself face to face with the minimonster.

Twenty years on, that one shock will still lift you clean out of the seat. Eventually Wilson takes matters into his own hands, steals a gun and, somewhat dangerously, opens the plane door and kills the creature. He has saved the plane and passengers but is still not believed and is taken off the plane in a strait-jacket.

In the new *Twilight Zone* movie, the episode is remade and improved upon by director George (Mad Max) Miller. John Lithgow, who made such a great impact as the transvestite in *The World According to Garp*, essays the role originally played by Shatner. Reportedly the film episode was to be directed by Joe Dante who wanted Shatner to reprise his part. When he looks out on the wing and sees the gremlin he screams, "Oh no! It's happening again!" In the TV version the Gremlin was played by Burt Lancaster's ex-trapeze artist circus partner Nick Cravat, wearing a furry suit which, though a little crude, remains effective.

Another fifth season episode, *Steel* again scripted by Richard Matheson from his own short story, featured a return to the world of boxing with which Serling was still obviously fascinated. Lee Marvin gave a powerful performance as "Steel" Kelly, owner and manager of a robot boxer named Battling Maxo, a machine in desperate need of repairs. Maxo is incapable of fighting so "Steel" disguises himself as the robot and enters the fight in an attempt to win the money to repair his fighting machine. He loses, beaten about badly, but wins enough cash to return his "fighter" to working order.

The episode is reputedly Matheson's own particular *Twilight Zone* favourite and the show benefited greatly from the direction of Don Weis and the make-up expertise of William Tuttle, who had supplied to extraordinary make ups for the Morlocks in *George Pal's The Time Machine* in 1960. Like so many of the *Twilight Zone* episodes, it displayed Serling's concern for humanity within the characterisations, as well as utilising the show for making moral statements about various

aspects of our society.

One particular episode of *The Twilight Zone* which deserves special mention appeared at the end of the fifth and last season in February 1964 and was repeated in September of the same year. It has never again been shown as part of the series in all the various syndication packages that the *Zone* has been offered over the years. The reason is simple. *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* was not made by the *Twilight Zone* producers at all. Rather it was a short French film directed by Robert Enrico which so impressed Rod Serling that he bought the rights to air the film as part of his series.

An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge, based on a story by the great American master of the subtly macabre, Ambrose Bierce, told the tale of a captured confederate spy during the American Civil War. As he is readied for execution by hanging his thoughts are of home and his wife. With a noose around his neck, he is pushed from a plank off Owl Creek Bridge; the rope breaks and he falls into the river below. He swims to safety and furiously makes his way to where his wife awaits. As she puts her arms around him he is suddenly back at the end of the rope – dead. This "episode" provided a real first for the *Zone*, and to the best of my knowledge a first for any TV series, for *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* won an Academy Award Oscar.

On this prestigious note, *The Twilight Zone* came to an end after a successful five season, 152 episode run. For such a long-running series the success rate of *The Zone* was extraordinarily high – in the main due to Rod Serling's determination to not let the series fall into the familiar formulaic patterns which seem to beleague the vast majority of the fodder churned out by the American TV networks' corporate thinking. Indeed it's difficult to think of many series which have so constantly maintained such a high standard, although in recent years both *Lou Grant* and *Hill Street Blues* spring to mind.

Although *The Twilight Zone* suffered some network tampering – an enforced hour long format in the fourth season, which simply refused to work – Serling and Houghton and the latter's successors Bert Granet, William



Frog and Herbert Hirschman simply wouldn't allow this corporate interference to impair the quality of the show. Sadly, Serling's later series *Night Gallery* would not allow the master story teller the same degree of autonomy, and despite a strong start with a pilot TV movie which had Steven Spielberg making his professional debut on one of the three tales contained therein, the series rapidly went downhill, much to Serling's despair. For, although *Night Gallery* did contain some marvellous moments, particularly the truly extraordinary *They're Tearing Down Tim Riley's Bar*, it never captured the sheer magic which *Twilight Zone* had treated audiences with week after week.

Rod Serling died on June 28, 1975 following ten hours of open-heart surgery, after a mild attack a month before. He was only fifty years old. But his greatest creation, *The Twilight Zone*, refused to die with him. The series has been in constant syndication and in some areas in America still runs up to five nights a week. Its popularity remains undiminished as generation after generation discover its delights anew.

But that's not the end of the story of *The Twilight Zone*. In 1981 *The Twilight Zone Magazine* came into existence. Despite being somewhat difficult to obtain in this country, it is certainly worth seeking out from the various specialist shops, for it contains much in the way of additional Zone information. The prestige publication contains new fiction by the likes of Stephen King and Robert Silverberg as well as reprints of original *Twilight Zone* scripts and interviews with people connected with the series. It fosters new talents through its highly regarded writing competitions as well as featuring many rare stills from the show.

In 1982 Stephen Spielberg and John Landis joined forces to produce *Twilight Zone: The Movie*, a film tragically bedevilled by the now famous helicopter crash which took the lives of actor Vic Morrow and two young Vietnamese children and in so doing gave the ever-sensation-seeking Press a field day. Repercussions of the tragedy are still being felt by those involved and will do for many years to come.

In its 152 episodes *The Twilight Zone*, Rod Serling's brainchild – nurtured with love and affection by television's finest teller of strange tales – displayed a breadth of vision and a love of the fantastic quite unique in the annals of television. In retrospect, a statement made by Rod Serling in his last published interview captures the essence of the man and the writer and the force which drove him. In speaking for himself Serling also spoke for every writer who puts pen to paper, plays seek and destroy while punching out words on a battered old Olivetti or who hits CUT and PASTE buttons on a work processor – "I just want them to remember me a hundred years from now. I don't care that they're not able to quote a single line that I've written. But just that they can say, 'Oh, he was a writer.' That's sufficiently an honoured position for me." ■

THE INCREDIBLE WORLD OF HORACE FORD

with Pat Hingle

"Mr Horace Ford, who has a preoccupation with another time, a time of childhood, a time of growing up, a time of street games, stickball and hide 'n' seek. He has a reluctance to go check out a mirror and see the nature of his image: proof positive that the time he dwells in has passed him by. But in a moment or two he'll discover that mechanical toys and memories and day-dreaming and wishful thinking and all manner of odd and special events can lead into a special province, uncharted and unmaped, a country of both shadow and substance known as The Twilight Zone."



THE MERCHANDISE

In the five seasons that Rod Serling's *Twilight Zone* tv show was being network broadcast in the United States, much in the way of licenced tie-in books, magazines and comics was produced. The longest running and most successful of these was the four colour comic book published by the Dell/Gold Key organisation. There were also paperback anthologies of stories, hardback books, British style children's annuals and even a board-game by the Ideal toy company. Rod Serling's widow, Carole, is currently involved as one of the publishers of *The Twilight Zone Magazine*, which is devoted in part to the chronicling of the history of the show as well as presenting new fiction, and media reviews. The magazine is not officially distributed in Britain, though copies may be obtained through specialist outlets like Forbidden Planet. An enquiry with a stamped addressed envelope should bring you details of the price.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I am indebted to Marc Scott Zicree's superb *The Twilight Zone Companion*, without which much of the information and quotes could simply have not been included in this article. If you are interested in any way in *The Twilight Zone*, then Zicree's meticulously researched and brightly written tome is indispensable. Other books consulted: *Fantastic Television* by Gary Gerani and Paul Schulman, *Writing For The Twilight Zone* by George Clayton Johnson. Extra special thanks go to Nic Crouley of Warner Bros (London) and particularly to the dynamic duo of Hollywood limo, Jean-Marc and Randy Lofficer without whom there simply would have been no *Twilight Zone* article at all!

Phil Edwards

THE TWILIGHT ZONE COMPETITION

In collaboration with That's Entertainment Records and Warner Brothers Film Distributors, Starburst magazine is offering prizes for the first 60 correct entries pulled from the editor's hat in this special Twilight Zone Competition. The prizes include Warner Brothers soundtrack albums from the movie, featuring the music of Jerry Goldsmith, That's Entertainment soundtrack albums from the TV show, featuring the music of Jerry Goldsmith, Bernard Herrmann and many others and paperback novelisations of the movie. Prizes will be allocated on a first come, first served basis!

TO ENTER: Answer each of the questions below correctly. Write your answers on a postcard, along with your name and address and attach the entry stamp on the corner of this page to your entry. All entries should be sent to us at: Twilight Zone Competition, Starburst Magazine, Jadwin House, 205-211 Kentish Town Road, London NW5, and should be postmarked no later than 5th October.

THE QUESTIONS:

- Which of the following well-known movie directors did not direct any episodes of the Twilight Zone TV Show.
a) Jacques Tourneur
b) Richard Donner
c) Joe Dante
- How many Twilight Zone TV Show Episodes did Forbidden Planet's Robby the Robot appear in?
a) One
b) Two
c) Three
- Which episode of The Twilight Zone TV Show won an Oscar?
a) "An Occurance at Owl Creek Bridge"
b) "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet"
c) "The Brain Centre at Whipple's"



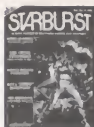
RULES:

The competition is open to all readers of Starburst except employees of Marvel Comics Ltd, That's Entertainment Records and Warner Brothers Film Distributors. You may enter as many times as you like provided each entry is accompanied by an entry stamp. All entries must be on postcards. All entries not on postcards and/or not bearing entry stamps will be disqualified. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into. The results will be published in issue 65 of Starburst magazine.

THE
TWILIGHT
ZONE
ENTRY STAMP



Starburst 5
The Making of Superman, Lucas/Spielberg/Cop, pola profiles, Dark Star, John Carpenter & Doug Trumbull interviews



Starburst 12
Derek Meddings (spfx) & Richard Kiel on Moonraker, NASA the Movie, The Thing (1951), The China Syndrome, Spaceman and King Arthur



Starburst 13
Buck Rogers the Movie, Moonraker review, Steed and Emma in The Avengers, The Making of Alien, Omega Man, Art of Space 1999



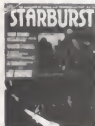
Starburst 14
Alien review, Emma & Steed in The Avengers, Gandahar animation, Saturday Morning Serial feature, The Time Machine (1960), K9



Starburst 15
Quatermass 4, Roger Dicken on Alien, Sapphire & Steel, History of Doctor Who, Day the Earth Stood Still (1951), Prophecy



Starburst 19
Star Trek the Motion Picture, Tom Baker/Graham Williams interview, Land of the Giants, Making of Saturn 3, Black Hole review



Starburst 27
Doctor Who producer interview, Making of The Shining, Films of Ray Harryhausen, The Hearse, Ray Bradbury interview



Starburst 28
Flash Gordon, CEK the Special Edition, Joanna Lumley interview, Carrie, Dressed to Kill, King Kong (1933) special effects



Starburst 29
Battle Beyond the Stars preview, Marvel Convention report, Brian Clomens on The Avengers, Dario Argento's Inferno, The Fog



Starburst 30
Flash's 7 Effects, Terror Train, The Changeling, Hawk the Slayer, Paris Fantasy Film Festival, The Island, The Passion of Jenny Logan



Starburst 31
The Making of Superman II, Battle Beyond the Stars, Sybil Danning interview, Douglas Adams on Hitch Hiker's Guide, The Wizard of Oz



Starburst 32
Superman II, Making of The Monster Club, Frankenstein (1931), Brave New World, Jacqueline Pearce on Blake's 7, Motel Hell



Starburst 39
The Making of BBC's Day of the Triffids, Disney's Sleeping Beauty, The Thief of Bagdad (1940), Jim Francis of Blake's 7



Starburst 40
An American Werewolf in London, Dead and Buried, The Beyond, Roger Corman poster gallery



Starburst 41
Heavy Metal, Shock Treatment, David Giler on Alien, History of Amicus I, Wolfen, Quiz, Michael Armstrong interview



Starburst 42
Making of Dragon-slayer, Wolfgang Reitherman on Disney Animation, Connery on Bond, Making of The Thing



Starburst 43
Harrison Ford on Star Wars/Raiders, Dragonslayer, In-depth Star Wars feature, Battletruck preview, Richard O'Brien



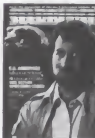
Starburst 44
Halloween 2, Ghost Story, Argento's Suspiria, Possession, Fade to Black, Disney on video, Wes Craven on Deadly Blessing



Starburst 51
Ridley Scott & Syd Mead on Blade Runner, Sword and the Sorcerer, Plague Dogs, Basket Case, E.T. preview, Tron



Starburst 52
Special Krull issue: Interviews with producer, director, designer, special effects team, stars, making of the film. Schwarzenegger



Starburst 53
Steven Spielberg I, Creepshow, Just Before Dawn, New York Ripper, Last Horror Film effects, Harrison Ford interview



Starburst 55
The Making of Dark Crystal, Schardner on Cat People, Paris Fantasy Film Festival report, Class of 1984, The Mask of Fu Manchu



Starburst 56
Fantasy Females, Spielberg II, Ulysses 31, 1990: The Bronx Warriors, The Dark Crystal, Serial poster gallery



Starburst 57
Xtro review, Sam Raini & Robert Tapert on Evil Dead, Dario Argento's Tenebrae, Miller on Twilight Zone

**Starburst 21**

The Brood, Zombie Flesh-eaters, Ian Scoones on BBC Effects, Fantasy Film Chart, Mission Galactica; The Cylon Attack, Outer Limits

**Starburst 22**

John Carpenter profile, Making of Empire Strikes Back, David Cronenberg interview, The Invisible Ray (1936), Baron Munchausen

**Starburst 23**

Empire Strikes Back, Long Weekend, Making of Flash Gordon, Nic Roeg on Flash Gordon, Lisberger on Animalympics

**Starburst 24**

Caroline Munro interview, Mark Hamill on Star Wars/Empire, Reg Hill on Century 21, Colin Chilvers on Superman/Saturn 3, Stingray

**Starburst 25**

Gary Kurtz on Star Wars/Empire, Irwin Kershner on Empire, Making of Popeye, Zoran Peric on Superman effects, Glen Larson

**Starburst 26**

Comic Heroes on Screen, Brian Johnson on Empire effects, Fantasia (1940), Simon, Roald Dahl interview, Wolf man

**Starburst 33**

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**Starburst 34**

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**Starburst 35**

Extra colour pages, Altered States, Ray Harryhausen on Clash of the Titans, Excalibur, Kinvg, Plan 9 From Outer Space, Richard Donner

**Starburst 36**

Raiders preview, John Carpenter on Halloween/The Fog/Escapes from New York, Rocky Horror Picture Show, Sarah Douglas

**Starburst 37**

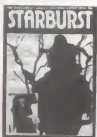
Raiders, Outland, For Your Eyes Only, Time Bandits, BBC's Day of the Triffids, John Carpenter interview, Joe Dante on The Howling

**Starburst 38**

Making of Quest for Fire, Glynis Barber on Blake's 7, Escape from New York, The Bells, The Hand, The Final Conflict, Steford Wives

**Starburst 45**

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**Starburst 46**

Jean Jacques Annaud on Quest for Fire, Jamie Lee Curtis on Halloween/Road Games, Michael Reeves profile

**Starburst 47**

Cat People (1942) & (1982), Road Games, 3D movies, Timeslip, Swamp Thing, Conan the Barbarian, Cat People interview

**Starburst 48**

Special Zombie Issue, Lucio Fulci interview, Jean Rollin on Zombie Lake, City of the Living Dead

**Starburst 49**

Star Trek II, Frank Marshall on Raiders, Star Wars/Empire double bill, The Making of Blade Runner, Shark

**Starburst 50**

Ivor Powell on Blade Runner, Rick Baker interview, Poltergeist, The Secret of Nymph, John Carpenter's The Thing

**Starburst 58**

Richard Marquand on The Return of the Jedi, The Haunting (1963), Fantasy Quiz, The Making of The Keep, Evil Dead

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JACK CLAYTON

Ray Bradbury's classic fantasy tale *Something Wicked This Way Comes* poses a very simple question. What price would you pay to make your deepest desires a reality? In Bradbury's semi-autobiographical metaphor for life and death this question is asked by Mr Dark, proprietor of Dark's Pandemonium carnival which mysteriously appears one night in Green Town, Illinois. And the answer has confounded such luminaries as producers Robert Chartoff and Irwin Winkler and directors Sam Peckinpah, Mark Rydell and Steven Spielberg, all of whom have been connected with abortive attempts to film the book since its publication in 1962.

Something Wicked This Way Comes began as a short story in *Weird Tales* in May 1948 called "Black Ferris". Ten years later Bradbury adapted it into a screenplay for Gene Kelley as he was so impressed with Kelley's direction in *Invitation to a Dance*. When adequate financing could not be found, Bradbury then turned this adaptation into a novel and deemed it his most personal favourite work. In turn it rapidly achieved cult status with 14 year-olds everywhere whose imaginations were ignited by the images and passion contained in it.

While it is easy to see why *Something Wicked This Way Comes* has intrigued film-makers over the years, it wasn't until a chance

After several failed attempts to film the classic Ray Bradbury story *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, director Jack Clayton, whose previous credits include the Oscar winning *Room at the Top* and the superlative ghost tale *The Innocents*, has succeeded in capturing the atmospheric tale on celluloid. Alan Jones caught up with Jack Clayton in Los Angeles and talked to him about the making of the movie.



"I had never done a fantasy film before, which is why I was intrigued by *Something Wicked This Way Comes*."

meeting between Bradbury and producer Peter Douglas, son of Kirk, that the long-awaited project finally looked near to fruition. Douglas learnt from Bradbury that the rights were available and quick as a flash he snapped them up. That was in 1976 and the intervening years were spent working on the script with Bradbury's approval and packaging the film to include British director Jack Clayton until *Something Wicked This Way Comes* finally went before the cameras in September 1981.

Something Wicked This Way Comes marks the return of Jack Clayton to directing after an absence of nine years since *The Great Gatsby*, and it is only his sixth film in a stellar career that earned him an Academy Award nomination in 1959 for *Room at the Top* and the respect of genre fans with his highly acclaimed film adaption of the classic Henry James novella, "The Turn of the Screw" - *The Innocents*. His other films include *The Pumpkin Eater* and *Our Mother's House* and he is about to start work on bringing the Robert Ludlum thriller, "The Bourne Identity", to the screen with Burt Reynolds.

So why does Jack Clayton keep such a low profile in the industry? "Mainly because I don't like doing the same thing twice. Once I've done something, I have conquered it and really have no desire to repeat myself. After *Room at the Top* I was offered every other kitchen sink drama from *Saturday Night* and *Sunday Morning* downwards. Once you have created a baby - and it is a baby to me - and it



is released into the big wide world, you feel an enormous loss. The last thing you want to do is remind yourself of it, so you set out wanting another one that is quite different. All my films fall into specific categories - kitchen sink, horror, psychological drama, but I had never done a fantasy before which is why I was intrigued by *Something Wicked This Way Comes*."

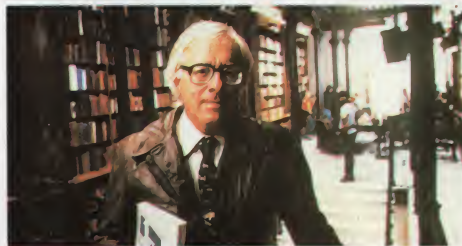
Clayton met Ray Bradbury in 1956 when the latter was working on the screenplay for John Huston's *Moby Dick* and it was this encounter that was to lead him to being one of the first persons to read the revamped short story. "I was supposed to produce *Moby Dick* but didn't because Huston wanted to tie me to a twelve year contract to produce all his forthcoming pictures. I had been stuck as a producer and an associate producer when all I really wanted to do was direct. The saying really is true - 'Don't be too good at what you don't want to do'. A couple of years after our meeting Ray asked me to read the book and that began the long saga of how I became involved with *Something Wicked This Way Comes* and why people refer to it as my pet project. Fox were the first studio interested and then Paramount but because of a feud between the head of production and the chairman of the board it was cancelled. I was working on a script with Waldo Salt called *Revelations* when the next opportunity to direct it cropped up but again fate intervened

"I had been stuck as a producer and an associate producer when all I wanted to do was direct."

with the impending director's strike that ultimately didn't happen. And then Disney entered the picture and the project gelled at last."

Clayton liked the story so much because it was cast in the classic Good versus Evil mould. "Albeit in an obvious stylised way. I had certain theories about the story that I tried to put into action in the film. You can only make a fantasy - or even a farce for that matter - only provided you root the beginning in reality. *Something Wicked* starts very normally and from that...it's just my theory, whether it will work or not we will just have to wait and see."

One thing Clayton is clear about is that apart from the more absurd inclusions, the script is extremely faithful to the Bradbury original. "Instances of the type of things I cut from the script were the look of The Dust Witch and the way she arrived at one point to menace the two boys. In the book the Witch was conceived as a conventional fairy tale one, warts and all. I wanted to make her beautiful so you would believe she could possess the power to tempt the townspeople. In one moment, in the book, and a mistaken one I think, she floats over a house in a balloon and is shot down by one of the boys with a bow and arrow. All I can say to the purists is that Ray was more happy with the result. The first script he gave was 257 pages long and as I have a good relationship with writers, rather than be harsh with him as he is a very gentle person, instead of me saying 'Halve it', each



Top: The inert body of the Dust Witch (Pam Grier) lies on display in the window of the town's funeral parlour as an omen of the Coming Wickedness. Centre: The Carnival comes to town. Above: Ray Bradbury poses for a portrait on the Library Set. Left: Mr Dark (Jonathan Pryce) leads the Carnival parade.

day we lost about ten pages until we came to a more manageable length of about 140 pages. Then he totally rewrote it to bring it up to date. When I say that I mean I suddenly realised what I hadn't before, and it didn't apply in the past as much as now, that children, like the ones Ray had written about, just don't exist anymore. A carnival coming to town used to be a big event years ago, but now what with the advent of television, something like that hardly causes a ripple. That is the reason we placed the events in the 30s. Also in the book and the first script the relationship between Halloway, the Jason Robards character, and his son Will was far too sugary and as a result didn't develop. So we changed the father somewhat to make him more aware of his age and we made him think he was a coward because of a past incident involving Will nearly drowning. This means the film starts off with them being very edgy together and getting closer and closer as the story progresses."

By his own admission Clayton realises that had the film come together in the past, it would bear no resemblance at all to the film now in the can awaiting an October release. "Ten years ago you could still get away with a film like *The Innocents* which frightened people but used no special effects and made the audience use their imagination. Since then big changes have occurred and I'm not convinced they are for the better. People now are so used to seeing *Star Wars*, *Superman* or *E.T.*, although that is a definite exception to the rule. The script for *Something Wicked* as it now stands could easily have been made in the same way as *The Innocents* where an audience guesses who is right and what is dangerous. But for an audience who are dying

"Fox were the first studio interested and then Paramount, but because of a feud...it was cancelled."

for disgusting films like *Poltergeist* it wouldn't stand a chance. I don't like special effects films all that much. *Poltergeist* for example neither thrilled nor excited me but audiences today are conditioned by them. In *Something Wicked* I have used the absolute minimum possible, something which was constantly fighting the studio over as they seemed to want to overkill everything. I hope the result is satisfactory. It is quite different from *The Innocents*, as it should be and quite passable as a special effects foray."

In fact this lack of experience in the special effects field was the first thing Clayton mentioned to the Disney Studio on his arrival at their Burbank base. "I said, 'Listen gentlemen, I'm the kind of director who is good with actors, stories and atmosphere, but I know nothing about special effects, so please give me your best men who will explain everything to me as we go along.' The result was, and it wasn't their fault really, they had *Tron* being made which used up 135 of their personnel and at the same time were readying various items for the impending opening of EPCOT in Florida. So I was left with three people using thirty year old equipment. Being an obsessive over the story and character, I had no time to realise that the effects just weren't working. I was given a test every three days, each one worse than the last and only by the end of the film when all the effects should have been completed did the studio realise my predicament. They knew they were at fault and from that moment on, actually about six

months ago, I was given the Tron team. It was then that the arguments started which is typical of every major studio. They wanted to redress the balance too much the other way which is back to what I said earlier about overkill. At one stage everybody in the carnival was supposed to have constantly flashing green eyes. Needless to say, that is not in my picture."

Something Wicked This Way Comes stars Jason Robards, Britain's Jonathan Pryce, Diane Ladd, Ellen Geer and in the most surprising casting coup of the year, Pam Grier whose blaxploitation heritage with films like *Foxy Brown*, *Coffy* and *Friday Foster* gave no indication whatsoever of her talents until she played



"In the book the (Dust) Witch was conceived as a conventional fairy-tale one, warts and all. I wanted to make her beautiful."

the Puerto Rican prostitute in *Fort Apache - The Bronx*. "We couldn't afford a star for the role of The Dust Witch and in a way I'm glad because I believe putting stars in minor roles upsets the overall balance of a film as an audience will always say, 'Oh look it's...whoever.' I tested endless models and actresses until I woke up one night thinking that The Dust Witch had to be beautiful, exotic and a good actress, so why not a black girl? I had seen Pam in *Fort Apache - The Bronx* and thought she was brilliant so I cast her as I thought she was the best for the part. She is such a delightful person and it is upsetting when you realise there are so few parts available for such a gifted actress. It certainly caused a ripple at Disney when I cast her I can tell you I've never met an actor I didn't love me. I was lucky with Jonathan Pryce too, (who plays Mr Dark) who I saw in *Hamlet* in London. I think he balances Jason Robards beautifully. Their scenes together, especially at the end of the film, are spectacular."

Despite the trade journal *Variety* estimating *Something Wicked This Way Comes*' budget at 20 million dollars, Clayton reckons it was about 10 million, "Rising to 12 despite the fact that I ended exactly on schedule and the glorious sets cost too much. I honestly don't know where the extra 2 million went as I kept to my allotted 63 days shooting time and the set on the backlot designed by Richard Macdonald has recouped its cost many times over. It is the highest budget I have ever worked with, it's true, but the norm for a Hollywood production these days."

Union ruling on the working hours of children employed in the motion picture industry meant hard times for Clayton and his major

characters, Vidal I. Peterson as Charles Hallows and Shawn Carson as Jim Nightshade. "In Britain you are not restricted to the number of hours in which you can use child actors. Well, not in my time anyway. Here, in America, no child under 14 can work more than four hours a day. That was a major obstacle when you realise those two boys are virtually in every scene. It was frustrating because you would set up a shot and find the lighting was wrong and when you resumed you found you only had two minutes left in which the children could be used. So you have to make a decision on whether to abandon the shot and waste three hours or move onto something else. When we were making *The Innocents*, as long as there was a teacher or parent present, I could carry on. Remember also that children have different concentration spans, so it is difficult to constantly keep them interested. *Our Mother's House* was the most extreme example of that because I had such a wide range of ages to contend with. I must be a masochist as this is the third film I've done with children."

Clayton is adamant that *Something Wicked This Way Comes* contains no proof of him conforming to any particular directorial style throughout the years. "I hate copying anything I've ever done and the only time this ever happened to me was when I was directing *The Pumpkin Eater*. I awoke one night in a cold sweat realising that I had shot a scene that day that was exactly like one in *The Innocents*. The following day I changed it totally. Perhaps I'm not unique in that quality but I really do loathe the way others get away with it. Every great film has been copied and I find that despicable."

"Ten years ago you could still get away with a film like *The Innocents* which used no special effects."

Jack Clayton's choice for composer for *Something Wicked This Way Comes* was Georges Delerue who completed a score but had it discarded in favour of one from James Horner. "Georges' score was subtle and I thought quite beautiful. I adored it but executives at Disney thought it was too sombre and wouldn't work for today's audiences. Maybe it was wrong but the score as it stands now is louder, dramatic and overdone. But then is anybody happy with a picture they have made when it's over? I don't think I'm too intelligent at all but God seems to have endowed me with an abundance of instinct instead, so now it is a matter of waiting and seeing how a modern audience takes to the picture." ■



Top left: Jonathan Pryce, Jason Robards and Ellen Geer in *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. Bottom left: Jim Nightshade (Shawn Carson) and Charles Hallows (Vidal I. Peterson) playing the children who look mysteriously black during the opening sequence. Top right: Pam Grier in *Fort Apache - The Bronx*. Bottom right: Charles Hallows and Jim Nightshade in *The Innocents*.



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STARBURST REVIEW SECTION

SUPERMAN III

A STARBURST FILM REVIEW BY
ALAN JONES

It may not be everyone's idea of a *Superman* film but I loved every last minute of *Superman III*. Never having had the slightest interest in comic books, I can only sympathise with the purists who argue that this second sequel has betrayed its roots. I simply took it at face value – a popular entertainment designed to amuse and be enjoyed – and I wasn't disappointed.

The story is no great shakes, just Richard Pryor as a self-taught computer genius being blackmailed into helping nemesis Robert Vaughn take over the world's major commodity markets. But director Richard Lester wraps it all up in a canvas containing a wealth of sharp observation, campy one-liners and sly visual gags. And it is an approach that works to spectacular effect with a brilliant tip-off of the delights to come contained in the opening credits sequence. Clark Kent and Lana Lang's contrived romantic entanglement may be superficial but it is



the perfect counterbalance to the main thrust of the story. Up and coming fantasy female Annette O'Toole scores very highly here as Lana Lang by the way.

Some of the special effects are a bit suspect, like the Leaning Tower of Pisa joke and the plastic bubble prison, perhaps because Derek Meddings wasn't on hand, but for all that there is still that marvellous rush when Christopher Reeve takes to the skies. Reeve is given a lot more to do this time around thanks to a sub-plot involving a Kryptonite substitute that splits his personality in two. Watching him go to the dogs and hit sleazy bars complete with cheesy looking uniform is the film's major highlight.

But *Superman III* belongs to Richard Pryor as Gus Gorman who gives a marvellously understated comic performance. I will always remember him wearing the pink tablecloth cape and matching skis!

Sadly *Superman III* ends with a whimper and not the expected bang but it was certainly everything I could have wished for. It is definitely required viewing for anyone who feels that the big budgeted special effects movie has got a bit too pompous of late.

THE ALCHEMIST

A STARBURST FILM REVIEW BY
ALAN JONES

Charles Band, producer/director of such masterpieces of mediocrity as *Crash*, *Tourist Trap* and *Mansion of the Doomed*, has struck again. *The Alchemist* is another in his prolific conveyor belt line of schlock horrors that consist of one good idea searching for a coherent storyline to match it.

His reputation seems to rest solely on the minor touches he brings to these hack concepts, like the admirable stop-motion in *Laserblast* and *The Day*

Time Ended or the 3-D in *Parasite*. In the case of *The Alchemist* it is the deceptively simple notion of opening the gateway to hell and making us privy to what's on the other side. This occurs when an old woman incants an ancient spell to free her eternally youthful father from a curse that has condemned him to live life as an animal. Drawn into this ritual is a waitress, and the hitch-hiker she has picked up, due to her uncanny resemblance to the father's long dead wife.

Robert Ginty may be the star name in *The Alchemist* but on the strength of his performance as the cursed one with the dual personality problem, he'd do well to coast along on his notoriety in

The Exterminator for a long time to come.

The tedium in all this occult nonsense is made bearable by the inclusion of a welter of cheap gore-effects and some arrestingly gaudy lighting. But the long and protracted build to the opening of Hades is hardly worth the wait when all we get to see are two men running around wearing evil demon masks and a couple of awful special effects.

"Imagine hell let loose on the world," say the advertisements for *The Alchemist*. And never a truer word has been written because you'd be better off doing just that than waiting to see it materialise in this trash.

HUMONGOUS

A STARBURST FILM REVIEW
BY ALAN JONES

Humongous is pretty standard fare concerning a group of five teenagers who are shipwrecked on an island supposedly inhabited by a recluse who keeps it well guarded with a pack of vicious dogs.

The truth is a lot more sinister than that, though, as they find her diary revealing a past act of violence that will soon have dramatic repercussions on all their lives.

The shocks and twists are all telegraphed well in advance and will be of no surprise to anybody familiar to this sub-genre. But for all that, the first half an hour of *Humongous* is intriguing enough to make the film watchable even though it wears out its welcome long before the predictable climax.

Director Paul Lynch uses angled shots in an effective way and also keeps "the thing" stalking the woods in the shadows as much as possible which heightens the suspense – not by much admittedly, but enough to elevate *Humongous* above the similar drops of late.

And it is certainly a lot better than Lynch's last film, *Prom Night*, that's for sure.



ATOR – THE FIGHTING EAGLE

A STARBURST FILM REVIEW BY
ALAN JONES

Ator is a film so grossly incompetent on every conceivable level that it makes any detailed critical analysis pointless. The only approach to take is to treat *Ator* as a glorious exercise in low camp. It is a joke – but at least the joke isn't on us for a change. So buy some popcorn and a soft drink and sit back and revel in just how truly abysmal *Ator* really is.

While I can't exactly recommend it as a must-see, I'm convinced *Ator* will at some stage be elevated to the cult status similarly enjoyed by *Plan 9 from Outer Space* and *Car Women of the Moon*. So see it now to avoid future late night queues at the Scala.

The answer to the question, "What exactly is director David Hills trying to achieve with *Ator*?" is a simple one to answer. He is milking the very shaky *Sword and Sorcery* trend for all its worth. But there isn't much of either in the plot that only kindness forces me to say bears an incredible resemblance to that of *Conan the Barbarian*. Here though it is tricked out with all the typical Italian

exploitation incidentals in order to make the film appeal, as they say, to "a broader international market". Hence the 'lovable' baby bear who threatens to turn the film at any moment into a Walt Disney Wildlife epic, and the hilarious leather designer fashions that do at least seem at home in the 'prehistoric/medieval' disco sequences.

I'm not going to bother describing the story. All you need to know is that Ator grows up to discover his is in reality the son of Torin, whose destiny is to defeat the evil 'Black Knights' under the leadership of the King of the Spiders, (who true to his name has the little creatures constantly crawling over him), in order to marry the girl he loves. You can guess the rest yourself, but what I will tell you is that the pace is very leisurely, the action sloppy and unconvincing and that the lighting in no two consecutive scenes matches. All this means that the vague story disappears into a series of unrelated ideas that resolutely refuse to work.

Miles O'Keefe, who looks set to win the title of best undressed man of the year, plays the title role in *Ator* and not to mince words, he is awful. Looking more often than not something that the cat dragged in, I wasn't convinced he was anything more than a body in *Tarzan* and now that assumption is a certainty. No wonder he is making so many movies at the moment - they were probably made in two weeks like this one looks - so he can take the money and run before he vanishes into the imminent obscurity he is destined for.

There are so many priceless moments in *Ator* that it is difficult to know where to start. Perhaps I



shouldn't bother so you can discover the unintentional delights for yourselves. But some of them must have to be recorded for posterity! Find out why Laura (*Black Emmanuelle*) Gemser tells Ator to "Never touch that drapel!" and why our usually monosyllabic hero comes out with the amazing line, "Altruism doesn't fit you anymore than the maternity route". The mixture of pseudo-medieval phrases and hip L.A. street dialect is often a joy to hear. If you thought that television's *Wizards and Warriors* skated on thin ice with that sort of treatment - well, you haven't seen anything until you see *Ator*. The finale, involving a wire manipulated fake giant spider, is too good a moment not to divulge either. As *Ator* advances to vanquish this "menacing" creature, cries of "Cut the strings" emanated from the audience, and cheers resounded when the "lovable" baby bear rescues the Sandahl Bergman look-alike by shifting heavy rocks blocking the cave entrance. Well, you have to justify yourself somehow when you realise just how wretched a piece of trash *Ator* actually is.

The fact that the sequel, *Ator the Invincible*, is already in the can is news one receives with mixed emotions. Will it really be as bad as this? Obviously yes, so I suggest the makers do us all a favour and retile it *Carry on Ator* so we will know well in advance next time.

They certainly don't make films like this anymore. Do they? But then what else can you expect from director David Hills - or to use his real name Joe D'Amato. Sorry Joe, we are just not that stupid. You can disguise your name but not your lack of talent.

THE NEW BARBARIANS A STARBURST FILM REVIEW BY ALAN JONES

"Books, that's what started this whole apocalypse", says one character at the outset of Enzo G. Castellari's latest effort, *The New Barbarians*, and it immediately sets the whole ridiculous tone for this exercise containing few thrills but laughable low camp in abundance.

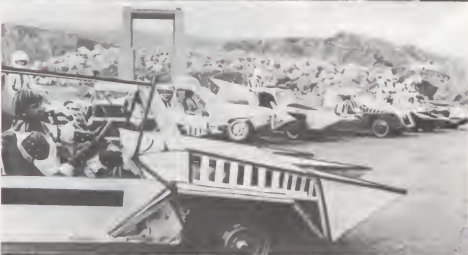
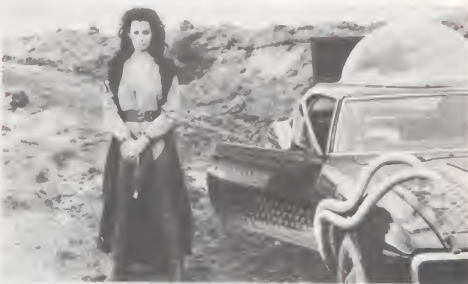
Hot on the heels of his *Bronx Warriors*, Castellari's film, this time round, is a *Mad Max* clone set in 2019 AD after the holocaust (a hilariously inept model shot that accompanies the opening credits) concerning a gay sect called the Templars who want to eradicate any remaining members of the human race. It is up to road warrior Skorpion and his black sidekick Nadir to put an end to their cruel slaughter.

Although long and drawn-out in parts, *The New Barbarians* is spiced up with a lot of head explosions and other, just about acceptable, gore effects to keep the interest. My favourite was the spear attachment on the bonnet of a Templar's souped-up car used to spike people in the crotch! But this hardly makes it commendable - probably the reverse - in most people's eyes.

What with the risible dialogue and Castellari's sledgehammer direction, I'm more convinced than ever that he makes it all up as he goes along.

Shot on location in what looks like a disused coal-tip on the outskirts of Rome, despite the ludicrous post apocalyptic fashions, *The New Barbarians* is really nothing more than a spaghetti western in hi-tech drag.

Castellari just can't get it right no matter how hard he tries. So for classic wrong-headedness in action, *The New Barbarians* will be patchily enjoyable for addicts who have to see everything.



It's been a year of let-downs so far. And apart from my personal life things haven't been too good in the cinema either. *Return of the Jedi*, *Octopussy*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes* – all have been disappointing – and now *Superman 3* fails to live up to expectations. . .

Admittedly I was less disappointed by it than the other three movies mentioned above but even so there's no avoiding the sad truth that it's the least successful of the Superman films. True, it has lots of good things in it but the parts fail to add up to a satisfactory whole.

Why? Well, I think there's something wrong with the basic construction of *Superman 3*. There are just too many plots within it with the result that the flow of the film keeps being interrupted while yet another narrative thread is introduced. We have Richard Pryor's predicament as a struggling computer programmer; Clark Kent's return to Smallville and his relationship with Lana Lang (Annette O'Toole); the creation of the evil Superman, due to Kryptonite poisoning, and the ensuing struggle between him and Clark Kent; and Robert Vaughn's numerous villainous schemes.

The latter represent one of the main problems with the movie. One villainous scheme would have been enough but as it is Vaughn comes up with several. Not only do they become increasingly illogical as the film progresses (getting all the oil tankers to sail into the centre of the Atlantic was silly enough – a single radio message to their respective captains would have immediately foiled that plot – but I just couldn't see the point of the super computer that Vaughn builds at the end) but the film comes to halt each time a new scheme is explained. What was needed was a single dominating plot line that could have provided a support for all the various sub-plots (in *Superman 2* it was the threat posed by the three super villains). As it is *Superman 3* is all sub-plots. . .

The other problem is that it's jokey-heavy. This has two adverse effects on the movie; one is that the jokey mood undercuts the few sequences that we're meant to take seriously, such as the ones dealing with Superman/Kent's relationship with Lana and the fight between his evil and good selves; second is that some of the jokes are so elaborate that they require lengthy establishing scenes, like the Olympic Games one, which further disrupt the already awkward pace of the film.

Even though many of the jokes are good ones the emphasis on comedy means that *Superman 3* lacks the emotional weight of Parts 1 & 2. The

It's Only A Movie A Film Column by John Brosnan



Above: Christopher Reeve as *The Man of Steel* examines a piece of strange green rock in a scene from *Superman III*. Below: *Superman*, alias Clark Kent, gets together for a picnic with childhood sweetheart Lana Lang (Annette O'Toole).



necessary mythic quality is missing so there are none of those emotional highs one got in the first two films (with the exception of the scene where Kent subdues his evil alter-ego and then rips open his shirt to reveal the 'S' symbol. . .). The lack of emotional involvement is most obvious in the climactic battle with the super computer – it's all very spectacular but far from being exciting. The real emotional climax of the movie is the battle in the junk yard between the two Supermen. . .

But as I said earlier there are lots of good things in *Superman 3*, like the well-choreographed pre-credits montage which ends with Superman rescuing a motorist from drowning inside his car, and the sequences concerning the evil Superman which provide Christopher Reeve with the opportunity to have some fun with the character (best of these was the barroom sequence with a drunk Superman flicking peanuts across the counter and shattering the bottles on the shelves).

Lastly a quick word about the special effects: these varied between excellent to pretty poor. The physical effects were consistently superior to the optical ones, which has been the case since *Superman 1*. Scenes involving travelling mattes and front projection left a lot to be desired whereas the most impressive effects sequences were those which relied almost entirely on physical effects, like the battle in the junk yard. British optical effects technicians are just unable to match the quality of their American counterparts (lack of facilities is probably the reason).

Comparing *Superman 3* to *Return of the Jedi* it's interesting to examine the differences in approach by Lucas and Lester. Lucas with *Jedi* went all out to give the *Star Wars* fans exactly what they wanted; ie, more of the same, whereas Lester bravely tried to do something different in *Superman 3* by inserting the subversive presence of Richard Pryor into Superman's comic book world. *Jedi* is a depressingly unoriginal piece of work that made (and is still making, probably) a fortune at the box office while *Superman 3*, as I write, appears to be something of a box office bomb. The reason for the latter's failure is, I believe, that the Superman fans, like the *Star Wars* ones, wanted more of the same. What they got was a Richard Pryor movie instead. . . Fine for the Richard Pryor fans but they obviously don't carry enough weight at the box office. . .

There is still *Supergirl* yet to come but I fear that will mark the end of the Salkind's super series. . .

But it was fun while it lasted. ■

Tape Reviews by Barry Forshaw

When Robert E. Howard created Conan, his massive sword-wielding hero-trief of a mythological age, he set in motion an industry that is today resulting in a glut of imitations in the burgeoning video market. This month, we'll try to sort the wheat from the chaff.

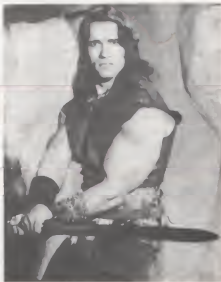
First, of course, was John Milius' *Conan The Barbarian* (Thorn/EMI). I'll refrain from discussing the film, as it has been so exhaustively covered elsewhere – other than to stand up and be counted as one of the film's admirers. (Alone among Starburst reviewers!) It seems from the plethora of Conan imitations that the limb-hacking high adventure aspect is what audiences want, rather than Milius' slower "Education of a Samurai"-type exposition.

Leaving till a future date the two Steve Reeves *Hercules* epics (the real beginnings of the genre), we'll begin with a winner.

OF SWORDS AND SORCERERS

It seems that sword and Sorcery epics just cannot win with the critics – *Conan* was criticised because Milius made some attempt at broadening out his film along the lines of Kurosawa's epics and not packing in enough Blood and Thunder: and now director Albert Pyun's *The Sword and the Sorcerer* (Rank Video) has received a roasting for precisely the opposite reasons!

While agreeing with Alan Jones' enthusiasm for Pyun's comic strip saga, I feel there is room for both approaches. Certainly, Talon (Lee Horsley) the hero of this film, is caught in a maelstrom of stunning effects that are doubly remarkable, given the film's modest budget: all the scenes involving the malignant wrlock Xusia (Richard Moll), are crammed with



visual delights (Xusia's hand which "beckons" the heart from her breast of a twist; the "cask of heads" – a tomb encrusted with twined, moaning faces); and the very rudimentary characterisations, combined with the all-action narrative, make for a very energetic ninety-nine minutes.

While the mainstream critics ignored all this in their usual rush to malign fantasy films, they did make some telling points. The characters really are too thin, and the action would not have been impeded by just a little more care – look how the similarly one-dimensional characters in *Star Wars* come alive with no slowing down of narrative peace. The names of characters are also a problem – why "King Richard" and "Cromwell"? Every time they are mentioned, they drag in all the wrong historical associations for this mythical era. And finally... those Bronx accents! Still, all such minor points are swept away by the roistering sweep of the Robert E. Howard-like yarn – particularly as the censor has thankfully left intact the more grisly elements of the barbarian era (such as swords cleaving heads). All of which makes this a full-blooded romp in every sense of the (s)word.

...OR SWORDS AND BARBARIANS

The Sword of the Barbarians (Videofilm Promotions) is good evidence of this latest video trend – striking Frazetta style advertising (a ferocious sword-wielding muscle-man, bare-breasted warrior-maid) pushing a film whose production values do not quite match. In this Italian *Conan* clone (complete with Sub-Poledouris score – in turn, sub-Carmine Burana!) all the development that should have gone into direction and writing has been concentrated into hero Peter McCoy's biceps and pectorals.

After a particularly tedious opening narration, things liven up with some carnage – but the ludicrously explicit disembowelings will have hardened genre fans chuckling (while would-be censors grab for their scissors). This entrail-spilling is particularly odd, as it appears only in the opening sequence – successive fights becoming progressively more bloodless, with a particularly tame dispatching of the villain. McCoy's acting demonstrates that he has put in far more time in gyms bench-pressing than in drama schools, and dubbing reaches new pinnacles of absurdity. Not one for Robert E. Howard connoisseurs.

BLOOD 'N' THUNDER

I suppose it might be inaccurate to describe *Thor The Conqueror* (VIP Video) as the lowest ebb of the Barbarian wve – after all, worse may be yet to follow. But this will do to be going on with.

Pseudonymous Conrad Nichols is bland as the sword-wielding hero (no apparent relation to the Stan Lee/Jack Kirby Marvel character – although the Norse God of Thunder is hopefully invoked at one point) and direction (I use the word loosely) is by the equally pseudonymous Anthony Richmond. (I wonder why director and star lurk under phony names when all the other credits make no secret of the fact that this is an Italian rip-off?). Sword-play is slow and careful (to avoid injury); script and dubbing dire.

IRONCLAD ENTERTAINMENT

Yet more Frazetta-like cover art for *The Ironmaster* (Medusa) might suggest another entry in this burgeoning market – but Umberto Lenzi's film is really of the Hammer school – the plot owing much to the *One Million Years B.C.* idiom (evil and good brothers vying for chieftainship of tribe). Perform-

ances are unexceptional to say the least (although Sam Pasco has sufficiently splendid biceps and pectorals to meet the slim demands of his role) and the dialogue is risible, but the prehistoric slaughter is lively enough and makes the video a reasonable rental proposition.

PALANCE THE BARBARIAN

Still trailing on *Conan's* loin cloth tails we find something called *The Barbarian* (Replay) – again with super-developed warrior à la Schwarzenegger on the cover art. Ah, but wait! the star is Jack Palance – well built, but hardly up to current bodybuilding standards; could this be Rudolf Maté's *Revak the Rebel* – filmed all of twenty four years ago, with a new title clumsily laid over the credits of the film? Yes, here we have the new growth industry in video – change the title and fool the public. On its own terms, *Revak the Rebel* (or *The Barbarian*, if you wish) has all the faults (many) and virtues (few) of its genre. If your video shop has *The Sword* and the *Sorcerer* that's the one to lay down your rental fee for.

HUMANIMALS 'N' SUCH

Leaving the claging of broadsword on shield, we move on to director Don Taylor's new version of H.G. Wells' *The Island of Dr Moreau* (Guild). This received a critical drubbing – rather unfairly, I think, as more of Wells' vision comes through than in the famous thirties version with Charles Laughton. Oddly enough, the very plot change that most worried critics – Moreau's chemical "bestialization" of the hero (ie reversing the process whereby he raised the evolutionary level of animals) works best in dramatically conveying Wells' main theme – the thin veneer of "civilised" man. The criticisms still stand – the beautiful photography of Moreau's islands lacks the menace of the earlier version, and Moreau's death has none of the horror of the vengeful scalpel-wielding "manimals" of Laughton's film. But there is a solid hero in Michael York, and while Burt Lancaster goes more for the quietly visionary scientist that Laughton's glinting-eyed zealot, this pays dividends – and the fiery finale is

topped by a pulse-raising fight with the last mutated creature. Laurence Rosenthal's full-blooded score is an asset, and the video picture quality is excellent.

MORE ZOMBIES...

Vengeance of the Zombies (Cannon) is, not to mince words, irredeemably bad in every aspect. A crassly directed (Leon Klimorsky) vehicle for the deadly Paul Naschy, it begins with ludicrously extended shots of London (in a vain attempt to convince us most of the film was shot in this country) and, to the accompaniment of an ear-splitting bad score, shambles through some of the least convincing murders since – well the last Paul Naschy.

To be avoided at all costs.

WORTH A LOOK

The Video field is proving an excellent outlet for films that would otherwise have sunk without trace – but, regrettably, the only really salvageable thing in *Heartbeeps* (CIC) is a characteristically imaginative John Williams score (and that, too, has gone down with the film, album plans cancelled). The film's premise is novel, two rogue humanoid robots (nicely played by Bernadette Peters and Andy Kaufman) escape from a factory and discover human emotions. Alan Arkush's direction is as efficient as Stan Winston's android make-ups. But the problem, as so often, is a largely unfunny script, and with nothing to work on, everyone flounders (there is a particularly tedious Dalek-like police robot, irritatingly over-used). Still, if your video shop has nothing more tempting...

CUJO'S COMING

Finally, courtesy of the invaluable *Videoscreen*, I have caught a video promo of the new film of Stephen King's *Cujo*, directed by Lewis Teague. Certainly the excerpts showing Dee Wallace menaced in her car by the rabid St Bernard of the title are effectively tight and claustrophobic – the problems will arise from maintaining this for a feature length film; after all, a shaggy dog looks only slightly more threatening than the ludicrous giant bunnies of *Night of the Lepus*, even when foaming at the mouth.



A glance at a recent issue of the American *TV Guide* shows how cable programmes are on the increase. Amongst the material on offer to the viewer are such movies as *The Long Good Friday*, *Eye of the Needle*, *Missing*, *Victor Victoria* and *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*. The three major networks CBS, NBC and ABC are not so fortunate having to make do instead with Steven Spielberg's disastrous 1941 and Stanley Kubrick's equally disastrous *The Shining*. There is also the usual selection of made-for-TV movies including *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* starring Anthony Hopkins, Derek Jacobi and Lesley Ann Down, and more importantly the two part SF chiller *V*.

V is a four hour film revealing that the United States is being occupied by extra-terrestrials. Arriving on Earth in gigantic spacecraft – the kind to give the Mother Ship from *C&K* a run for its money – these supposedly benevolent aliens hover over the major cities of the world. The human-looking visitors announce that they have come in peace, seeking only to borrow certain chemicals to revive their planet's atmosphere. In return they promise to share their vast scientific knowledge with the Nations of the World. However, everything is not what it seems. Can the aliens really be trusted?

The author of the story, Kenneth Johnson who created the *Bionic Woman* and *The Incredible Hulk*, describes the series as 'a contemporary retelling of the Nazi story via a Los Angeles microcosm.' Part One of the saga shows the growing evil from space and Part Two highlights the resistance by the people of Earth. Hopefully *V* will be picked up here for theatrical release, if not a future television screening.

One American channel that will be concentrating quite heavily on repeat programmes is a brand new one. A pay-TV service launched by Walt Disney Productions. Guaranteed to show only wholesome family entertainment, the Disney channel premiered on April 18th with a schedule consisting of 30% original programming and some 70% devoted to big screen movies, including *Dumbo*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Tron*. But before you faint at the prospect of Disney actually showing its

TV Zone by Richard Holliss



classics on the small screen, it's worth bearing in mind that *Dumbo* first appeared on American TV back in 1955 and *Alice* and *Tron* are readily available to buy in the shops on Walt Disney Video Tapes.

The new channel opens in the morning at 7.00 and closes around 11.00 at night. Figures in excess of 50 million dollars have been suggested as the finance necessary to run the service. Other recent feature films will probably include the less than successful *Dragonslayer*, *Popeye* and perhaps even *The Black Hole*. But this is unlikely to affect the European theatrical release of such movies.

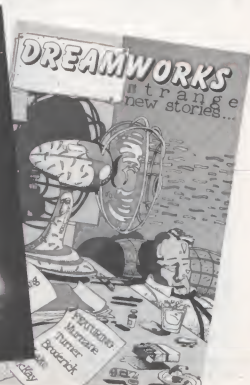
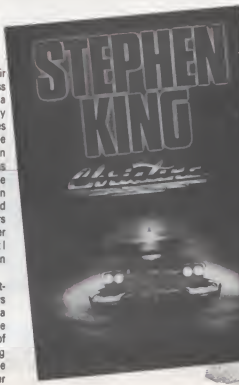
Amongst the shows on offer are one or two educational programmes. One is entitled *Wish Upon A Star*, which is a very similar format to the BBC's *Jim'll Fix It*, in which children aged 7 to 12 can live out their fantasies. With a chance to indulge in adult pastimes, they can play at being a fireman, a ship's captain or an aircraft pilot. Quite a few of the new series will be tied directly to promoting the new billion dollar complex EPCOT (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow) in Walt Disney World Florida. One programme, entitled *Dreamfinders*, features two of EPCOT's most popular characters, Dreamfinder and his pet dragon Figment. With the Disney company near to celebrating almost 30 years in television its amazing that the new channel still has over 200 hours of unseen material including shorts, cartoons and live action features.

Recently the BBC visited Walt Disney World and studied EPCOT in depth for their weekly *Everyman* programme. The aim of the show was to present, and then debate the apparent lack of religious significance in the Disney Empire as observed by American writer John Warwick Montgomery. His argument stated that World Showcase, the hub of the EPCOT project where Nations of the world are huddled together for the visiting tourist, is totally devoid of religious thought and therefore the ability to come to terms with the real world and its various peoples. This view was then discussed by members of the Disney organisation who generally felt that EPCOT was there to do good, it was a utopia of entertainment, their feeling on how the World should be, not necessarily would be. Although the two sides never met face to face, the programmes interviewer and presenter Brian Sibley gave viewers the impression that here were two very valid ideals about a highly delicate subject. Mr Sibley has the advantage of being a scholar in theology and a well established writer and broadcaster. He therefore made the whole programme thoroughly entertaining and yet at the same time most thought-provoking and that, amongst a sea of disapproving comment on the Disney organisation's ultimate experiment, comes as a welcome breath of fresh air.

BOOK WORLD by Chris Charles

Most writers would love to have their books on the bestseller lists, but success can often bring its own problems. Once a writer breaks into the big league he's virtually assured of a readership, no matter what he writes next. Too often this can lead to a lack of discipline which results in overblown books whose main achievement is a display of self-indulgence. This has happened with, for example, Norman Mailer in the wider literary world, and with Robert Heinlein in science fiction: both have produced inflated and tedious books in the later stages of their careers which do not stand comparison with the earlier works on which their reputation was founded. But I don't think that this is going to happen with Stephen King.

King's latest novel, *Christine* (Hodder & Stoughton, £8.95) is another bumper effort in more ways than one. It runs to close on 500 pages and is a smooth ride all the way. The basic premise of the book is a simple one: a haunted car (the Christine of the title) revenges itself on its enemies by killing them. But it's King's skill at transforming the staple materials of the horror genre into something larger



and very relevant to our everyday lives which has always been his strength, and it is this that ultimately holds the reader's interest here: we grow to care about the characters and hence what happens to them.

Dennis Guilder and Arnie Cunningham are teenage friends in Libertyville, Pennsylvania in 1958. Arnie, simply and unpopular, sees an old 1958 Plymouth Fury which he immediately becomes obsessed with buying. The car's owner, an unpleasant man named LeBay, sells him the car and dies shortly afterwards. Arnie proceeds to renovate the Plymouth with remarkable speed. Then some punks with a grudge against Arnie smash up the car. But within a short time it's back on the road again, and each of the punks is hunted down by the car and killed. Meanwhile Arnie's girlfriend has abandoned him as a result of his increasingly erratic behaviour and turned to Dennis, who is in love with her. But they both know that if Arnie finds out about them he and Christine will seek revenge...

As ever, this is a very readable novel which is not simply about hauntings and gruesome deaths. King has a good feel for modern America, and there's genuine ambition at work here which indicates that he's not content to rest on his laurels. I hope he continues to set himself new challenges with each book since he clearly has gifts which extend beyond the ability to tell a rattling good yarn. *Christine* is not a perfect book by any means, but it's an object example of the popular novel at its best.

Downbelow Station by C.J. Cherryh [Methuen £1.95] is actually 50 pages shorter than King's novel, but it seems twice as long. Set in the future where the stars have been colonized and a split has occurred between Earth and the peoples of the Union who inhabit the farther reaches of space, the action focuses around the planet Downbelow and the space station in orbit around it. There's nothing

obviously wrong with the novel in terms of the way in which it's written, and yet there's a curious blandness of style which is characteristic of Cherryh's writing. I tried hard to concentrate on the story but my mind kept wandering and I'd be turning pages without really absorbing anything. A bit like watching *Blake's Seven* underwater, if you know what I mean. It's really depressing that this novel should win the 1982 Hugo Award since it seems to me to lack originality and vigour. It's the product of a decadent genre which offers no real surprises or of the kind of stimulus that the best traditional sf once used to provide.



M. John Harrison has frequently written scathingly about genre sf, and his new collection of stories, *The Ice Monkey* (Gollancz, £8.95) shows him as a writer who actively despises category science fiction yet still retains a residual fascination with some of its motifs, almost despite himself. Harrison is the kind of writer whose output tends to generate strong pro or anti reactions, and this collection will probably be no exception. Most of the stories focus on forms of physical or mental decay, and they are pervaded with an undertone of distaste for the human race. Sometimes this can be very effective - Harrison is good at pinpointing the banalities of everyday life - sometimes it can seem just a tiresome variation on a dismal theme. But at least

Harrison is his own man, and this collection will satisfy readers who share his low opinion of *homo sapiens*.

Dreamworks is a collection of short stories by Australian writers edited by David King and published by the Victoria-based Norstilla Press. 'Are you tired of sheep in your fiction and suntan oil in your reading matter?' asks the dust jacket - a question no doubt addressed to an Australian audience since the British reader would have to say, 'Well, no, not really.'

The blurb scrupulously avoids any mention of science fiction, yet the anthology contains some quite traditional sf stories along with other pieces which resist easy categorization. The prevailing tone is philosophical in all senses of the word. No galaxy-smashing heroes here, but meditations on art, culture, freedom and much else. Of the twelve stories, three struck me as being especially noteworthy: Kevin McKay's 'Life the Solitude' pays homage to the Nobel Prize winner Gabriel Garcia Marquez in an atmospheric story set in an Australia which has been colonized by the Spanish; Andrew Whitmore's 'Above Atlas His Shoulders' is a droll parable about freedom of choice whose meaning ultimately eluded me but which I enjoyed because the author displays a maturity beyond his years; Gerald Murnane's 'Land Deal' is an ironic piece which manages to say a lot about the Australian heritage in only six pages. The rest of the stories seemed to me to be competent but mostly lacking in passion, as if these predominantly young writers are so keen to distance themselves from the brash stereotypes of Australian culture that they're being too reticent for their own good. Still, this collection is welcome in providing a showcase for Australian writing; it's a pity no publisher in the UK at the moment is showing similar enterprise.

... Chris Charles

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JUDGE DREDD

OVER AMERICA

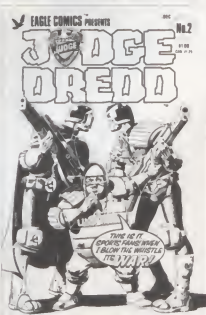
by Chris Charles

Judge Dredd invades America. Well, in comic book form anyway. Soon to appear in the USA and Canada is a full-colour dollar comic in the American format featuring some of the Judge's most famous exploits from the pages of our very own 2000AD. This is a reversal of the trend which has seen numerous Marvel Comics' characters adapted to black-and-white weekly publication in Britain, and it's just the latest project involving the enterprising Titan Distributors, who are based in London.

Titan are run by three directors, each of whom is responsible for a specific area of the company's business. I met Nick Landau, who runs Titan Books, the company's publishing imprint, in his basement office below one of the two *Forbidden Planet* shops in central London (there's another shop in New York). The walls of the office are covered with sketches, finished artwork, posters advertising signing sessions by writers and artists, and much else; the impression is of someone who's in the thick of the magazine and book-publishing industry.

Titan Books first came to my attention with the publication of two popular Judge Dredd stories which originally appeared in weekly installments in 2000AD. The strips were edited and compiled for large format book publication in single volumes; further Judge Dredd compilations were to follow, plus companion volumes featuring other characters from the comic such as Robo-Hunter and The ABC Warriors. 2000AD was launched in 1976 and Nick believes that it marked a renaissance in comics publishing in this country. Pat Mills, then the editor and chief writer, wanted to produce a new kind of comic with fast-moving stories and powerful artwork. The stories also contained a strong vein of humour, and though ostensibly aimed at a young audience, 2000AD attracted a large proportion of adult readers, which it retains to this day.

Nick was closely involved with 2000AD from the outset, having been offered the job on the comic after going to interview some of its staff. He's been interested in comics for well over 20 years and was one of the 50 people who attended the first comics convention in Britain in 1968. A few years later, at the ripe old age of 18, he decided to organise his own comics convention. At the time most comics fans in the UK were primarily interested in American publications, there being no home-grown products which were to their tastes. Influenced by the American comics conventions which he'd attended while living in the USA, he decided to get some British originators talking about their work. Nick recalls emceeing a panel discussion in which the then little known Terry Gilliam harangued another panel member over their differing approaches to animation. "We had incidents



like an underground cartoonist deciding at 3 o'clock in the morning that he was going to draw a comic strip over the walls of the hotel lounge. Things continued in a similar vein throughout the convention."

Nick then went to Warwick University, and soon became involved in the film society there; he transformed it from a loss-making enterprise showing obscure Italian films into the most profitable society on campus. Later he unearthed an unused TV studio, set up a television society, and started making documentaries.

After leaving university he went on to art college to do a Film & Television course. But there were few prospects of a job in the film industry, and when he heard rumours that a new comic was in production, he went to IPC to interview the people involved about its launch. "By the time we'd finished they'd offered me a job at 2000AD. I immediately said yes because I could see that 2000AD was going to turn into something very good. It was an emotionally-charged and exciting-looking comic. British comics had traditionally included such things as Captain Hurricane, who fights Nazis and twists gun barrels. 2000AD was something that was a little more serious. It was very funny as well, but you weren't laughing at the strips, you were laughing with them."

He became a chief sub-editor with 2000AD commissioning stories, working on covers, and so on. In 1978 he was also involved with the opening of the first *Forbidden Planet* bookshop in London, which specialises in selling fantasy and science fiction books, magazines and comics. Titan Distributors had been started the previous year, partly as a result of the inefficiencies in the existing UK distribution networks. There was obviously a gap in the market, and by establishing its own distribution company the problem was solved and useful contacts were made with publishers here and abroad.

Forbidden Planet prospered, and in the summer of 1981 its main London competitor, *Dart Thru Were and Golden Eyed*, went out of business. At the same time a new *Forbidden Planet* shop was being opened in New York, plus a second London shop, specialising in film and television material.

It was a busy summer, for Nick had also started to work on the book publication of Judge Dredd. This had come about when Nick suggested to John Saunders, then the Editorial Director of IPC comic group, that the early issues of 2000AD had now become highly sought-after. "Then why don't you reprint them?" came the reply. Nick went away and thought about it before deciding that rather than printing the issues wholesale, it would be better to do compilations of strips featuring a particular character from the comic. Judge Dredd, a perennial favourite with the readers, was the obvious choice. ►

The first Judge Dredd title appeared in 1981 and was reprinted early the following year. It featured the "Judge Death" episodes from 2000AD. With the scripts by John Wagner and artwork by Brian Bolland, the story has Dredd battling against a malevolent spirit which can inhabit the bodies of other people. It's a very effective combination of science-fiction and horror-motifs, with some splendidly atmospheric artwork from Bolland.

This was soon followed by Volume One of "The Cursed Earth" series by Pat Mills, Mike McMahon and Brian Bolland. Here Dredd leaves his usual habitat of Mega-City One to travel across a weird and ravaged landscape in order to deliver a life-saving vaccine to the plague-struck inhabitants of Mega-City Two. Accompanied by a futuristic punk and a sympathetic alien called Tweak, Dredd battles against vampire robots, plagues of flying rats, a huge Tyrannosaurus and much else. Each episode is fast-paced and packed with imaginative use of staple science-fiction materials; the stories are also notable for their flashes of wit and moments of genuine poignancy, as when Tweak discovers the grave of his murdered family. McMahon and Bolland's very different styles of visualization are strangely complementary, and the two volumes were an effective showcase of the best that 2000AD has to offer.

But this was just the start, a testing of the water. Titan kept their overheads to a minimum by not overprinting and by ensuring adequate distribution. The sales results were encouraging. The second "Cursed Earth" volume appeared, soon followed by Book One of "Judge Caligula" and the first volume of *The Robo-Hunter Casebook* by John Wagner and Ian Gibson. The latter featured the exploits of the cigar-chewing private eye Sam Slade, another popular 2000AD character. Gibson's stylish and distinctive rendering of the series was further proof that strong artwork has always been an important part of 2000AD's success.

Nick believes that Pat Mills helped to create in 2000AD the kind of environment in which artists would have the scope to develop and produce work which was on a par with the best in American comics. Until 2000AD appeared any tradition of imaginative comics illustration was moribund in this country, with artists seldom doing more than basic visualizations of scripts. He praises writers such as Mills and Wagner, who often plotted stories with specific illustrators in mind. "Some of the artists came to realize that there was the opportunity to do the kind of work which they hadn't believed was possible in British comics."

2000AD made a strong impression without in any way being a slavish imitation of American superhero comics. I asked Nick about the differences in the British and American products. "Well, for one thing American comics tend to take themselves very seriously, whereas in this country a certain amount of humour has always been important. The characters also tend to be more down-to-earth. 2000AD also identified strongly with many working-class interests, and I think that's also one of the secrets of its appeal—it's gritty and realistic. Before then, comics in this country tended to be a bit cosy and middle-class."

The success of 2000AD eventually attracted talent-spotters from the USA, and people such as Dave Gibbons and Brian Bolland have gone on to produce material for DC in the States. A new British publication, *Warrior*, also appeared in 1982, and Nick sees it as a logical development of what was started in 2000AD. *Warrior*, a monthly magazine published by Quality Communications, features sf and fantasy strips aimed at a more adult audience and includes a revived *Marvelman* from the 1950s. It had slower-paced, more intricately plotted stories which are not above portraying the intimate moments of its characters' lives. Some of its contributors also work for 2000AD or have been connected with the comic in the past.

Nick welcomes *Warrior* but is cautious about the overall commercial prospects of such publications: "It's important to put 2000AD in perspective. It occupies only a small proportion of the comics' market in this country. IPC publishes between 10 and 15 comics a week—girls comics, sports comics, adventure comics and humour. In adventure you've got *Battle*, 2000AD and *Eagle*, with at least two titles in each of the other categories. So in terms of the total number of comics bought every week the number of 2000ADs is really very small. Which is different from the American market, where 2000AD would be the market itself."

Nevertheless the audience for sf-related comics, if small, seems loyal, and Titan Books have been able to expand to a regular publishing schedule which is currently running at 2-3



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JUDGE CHILD



titles per quarter. In addition to reprinting strips from 2000AD they've also published a compilation of *Charley's War* (a World War I strip from *Battle*, scripted by Mills) and are preparing collections of *Gurth*, *Jeff Hawke* and *Modesty Blaise* newspaper strips, plus two books on Gerry Anderson entitled *The World of Gerry Anderson* and *The Gerry Anderson Episode Guide* by Starburst contributors Richard Hollies and Adam Pirani respectively.

Various other plans are afoot, but clearly the most important in the immediate future is the launch of the *Judge Dredd* American comic book, the first issue of which is due to appear this summer. The comic will be printed in the USA and published under the Eagle Comics imprint, in homage to the original inspiration for 2000AD. New covers by Brian Bolland have been produced for the first four issues which should be striking enough to catch the eye of even the most jaded American comic fan. Whether the North American audience will be receptive to the wry and quirky approach to storytelling remains to be seen. I certainly hope so, most American comics have been in the doldrums since the heady days of the late 60s and early 70s, and a good bracing whiff of British irreverence may be just what they need. Meanwhile Nick and his partners, Mike Lake and Mike Luckman, continue to be busy consolidating Titan, running their bookshops and organising promotional events. This year's New York comic art convention will be hosted by the U.S. *Forbidden Planet*, and let's hope that the British product gets plenty of exposure. I think that Nick and his two co-directors can claim to have done as much as anyone to publicize the comics medium in this country over the last several years. ■

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